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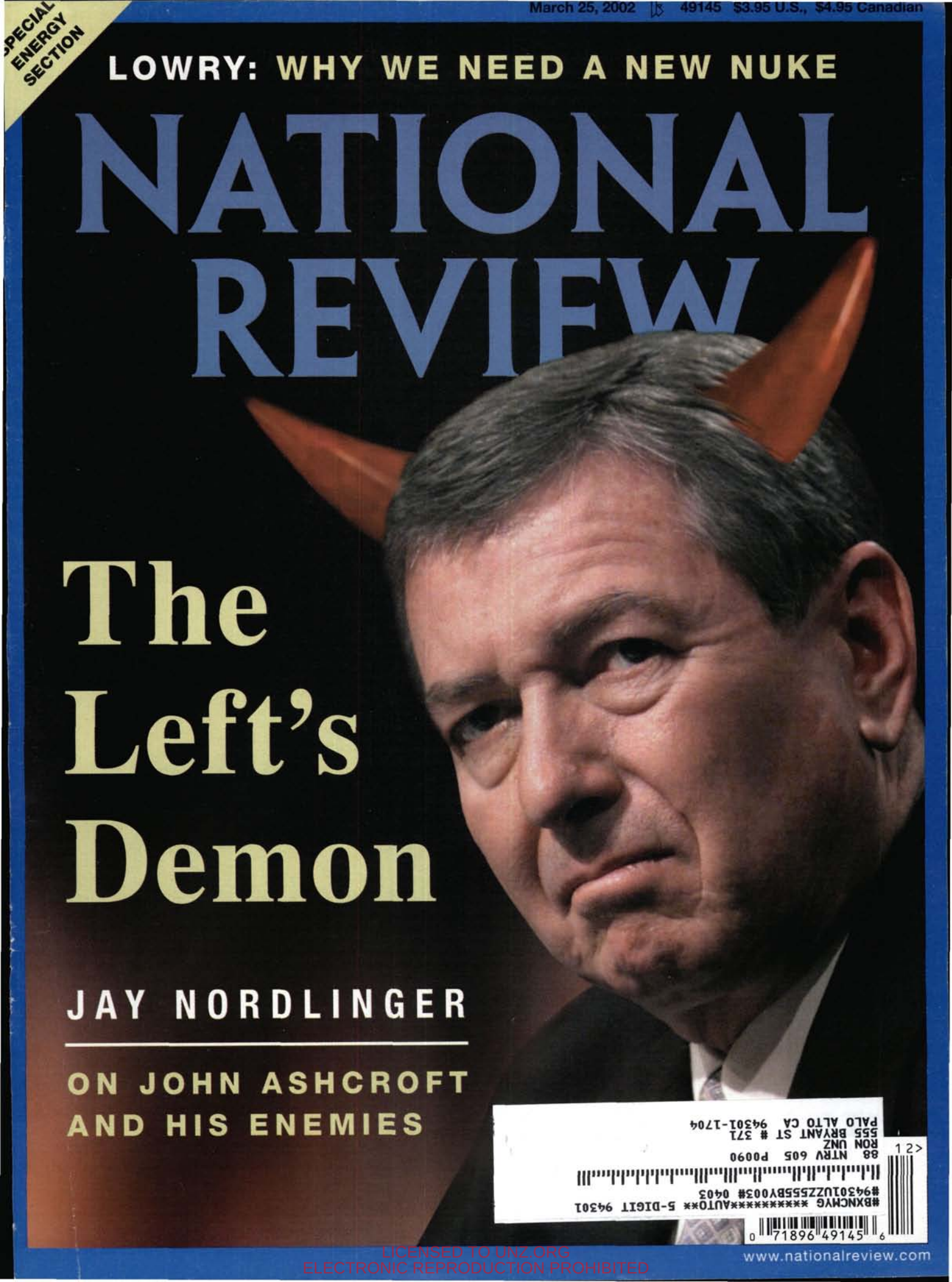
LOWRY: WHY WE NEED A NEW NUKE

NATIONAL REVIEW



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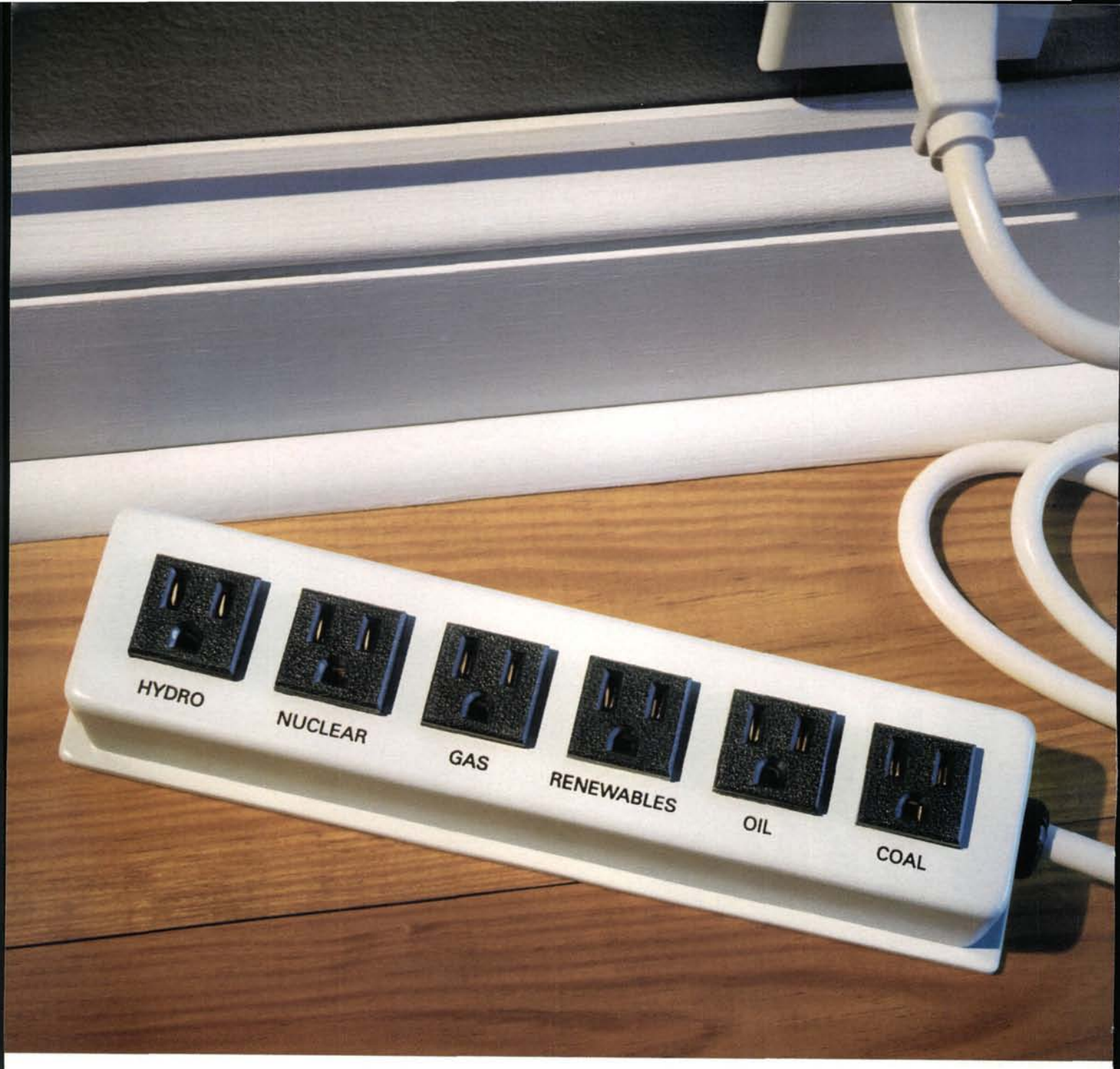

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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■ LETTERS ■

ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE

In his cover story ("The Gaggers and Gagmaking," March 11), Bradley A. Smith shows a lack of respect for the facts regarding the work of the Center for Responsive Politics.

First, Mr. Smith refers to CRP as one of the "campaign-finance-reform organizations" and implies that we are in favor of the Shays-Meehan bill. He is wrong. CRP neither supports nor opposes this legislation. Rather, we provide our analysis, numbers, and expertise to the press, as well as to groups and individuals (including members of Congress) who both support and oppose Shays-Meehan. In fact, contrary to Mr. Smith's assertion, we have publicly said that we think the bill will lead to an increase in hard-money giving from wealthy individuals and would not have prevented the hard-money contributions from Enron executives. Likewise, we have noted that the legislation would have prevented Enron's soft-money contributions to the national political-party committees. While Mr. Smith actively lobbies against Shays-Meehan, we prefer to point out what we think the legislation will and will not do and let others draw their own conclusions.

Mr. Smith also accuses CRP of running a "cynical" campaign by attributing contributions by individuals to their employers, thereby misleading anyone not reading the "fine print" into concluding "that the largest direct contributors to every member of Congress are corporations and unions." Visitors to our website (www.opensecrets.org) can see that what Mr. Smith refers to as "fine print" in the list of each member's top contributors is a statement at the top of the page in italicized type that "[t]he organizations themselves did not donate." The argument that using an analysis supported by a clear statement of methodology is not being up-front with the public is mystifying, especially coming from someone with an academic background. Moreover, Mr. Smith tries to make it sound as if CRP were biased and provides the data in only one configuration. In so doing, he fails to inform the reader that CRP makes its data available in a number of different ways, including breaking out individual contributions from corporate and labor soft-money and PAC contributions.

At the heart of his attack is his disagreement with our linking of individuals' contributions to their employers. (Contrary to Mr. Smith's assertion, CRP does not include stockholders in its analysis.) As Mr. Smith knows, many of these contributors are high-level executives in their companies who are solicited with appeals to their corporate loyalty and because of their executive positions. Mr. Smith never tries to explain why he thinks a corporation solicits its executives for contributions to candidates and then "bundles" those contributions together for delivery, if not so that the corporation can get credit for the contributions. Nor does he acknowledge that the present campaign-finance laws require candidates and party committees to ask contributors for the names of their employers.

Mr. Smith also sets up a classic straw man when he criticizes our ten-year profiles of industry giving patterns because the numbers include contributions to some members who are no longer in Congress. We never claim that those profiles show giving to only sitting members. Rather, they show what we say they show: the patterns of giving by industries over a period of time. Mr. Smith fails to mention, however, that charts showing industry giving only to sitting members are also available on our website.

What may be most disturbing about Mr. Smith's ill-informed arguments is that he engages in them at all. Regardless of what Mr. Smith thinks of the legitimacy of CRP, our funding, or our involvement in the Shays-Meehan debate, we are not government officials with the power to enforce the law. Bradley A. Smith, on the other hand, is a sitting member of the FEC who swore to administer and enforce the federal election campaign-finance laws. Instead of doing that, he has engaged in lobbying members of Congress against pending legislation that he will have to administer if it is enacted, and has used a magazine article to publicly attack organizations that, no doubt, will continue to appear before his agency.

Before Mr. Smith came to Washington, his opponents argued that someone holding his views should not be made responsible for enforcing the campaign-finance laws. (CRP did not get involved in the debate surrounding his nomination.) Mr. Smith's most recent crusade only confirms his opponents' fears. If Shays-Meehan does

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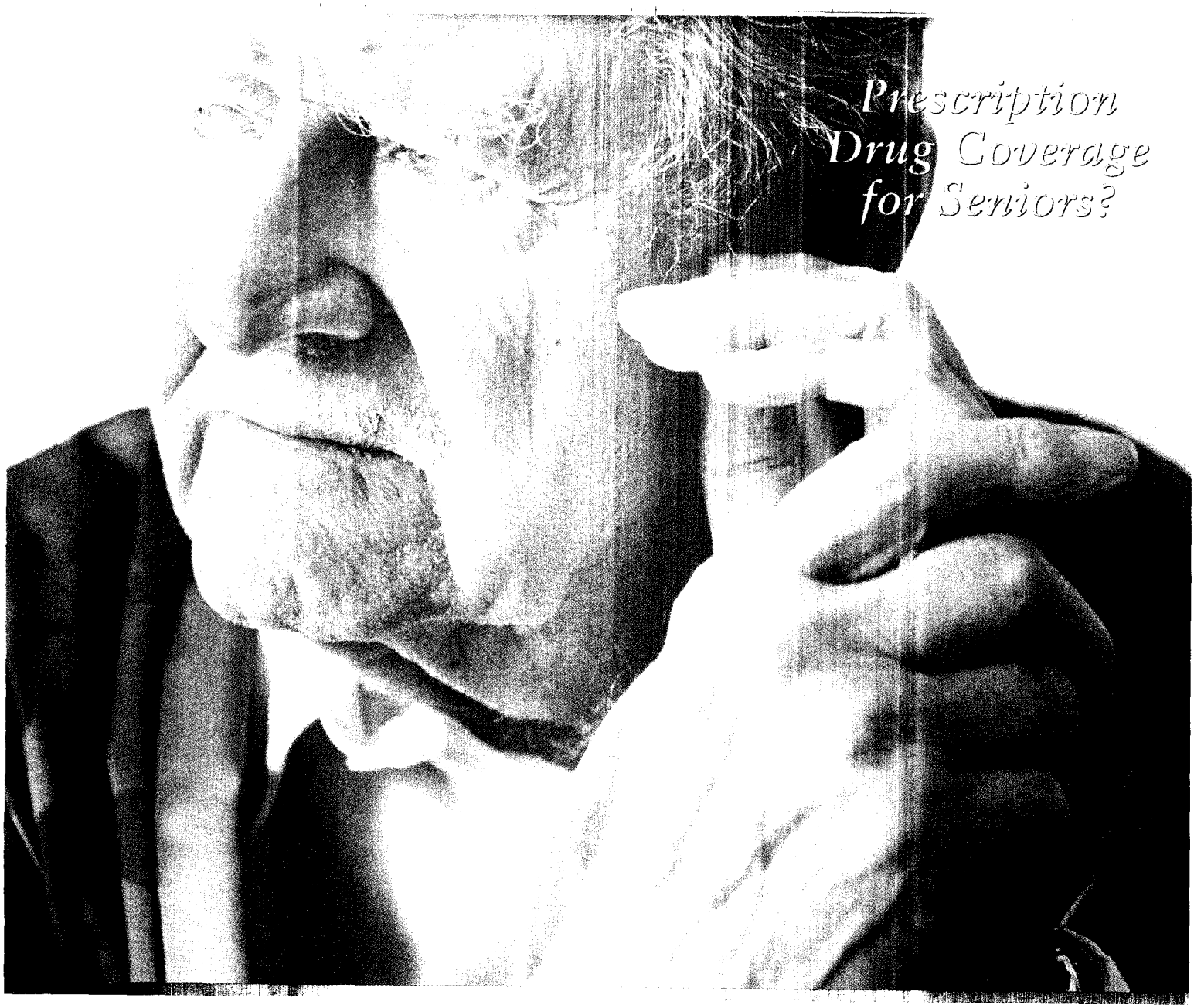

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become the law of the land, what kind of non-partisan and fair enforcement can the public expect from a commissioner who has worked with Republican members of Congress to actively oppose the law?

Thinking about that should be enough to make anyone who believes in enforcement of the campaign-finance laws gag.

Lawrence Noble, Executive Director
Center for Responsive Politics
Washington, D.C.

BRADLEY A. SMITH REPLIES: *Mr. Noble begins with the rather disingenuous assertion that his group is not a campaign-finance-reform organization, citing CRP's disagreements with other such groups. Of course, this merely shows that different groups within "an industry" may have different concerns and issues—something one won't find mentioned in CRP's listings of "industry" contributions.*

Mr. Noble next claims that his website is not misleading in how it attributes individual contributions to corporations. I would second Mr. Noble's advice that viewers go to the website and look for themselves. I would note that many news reports that apparently relied on CRP's website failed to make this distinction between individual and corporate contributions, suggesting that the "clear" explanation cited by Mr. Noble is not so obvious. Readers can also consider on their own whether CRP's practices of attributing individual contributions to corporations, and lumping ten years of contributions together—with no reference to total political spending over that time—clarify or obfuscate the issues involved and the best possible solutions.

Most disturbing is Mr. Noble's implication that the public cannot expect me to provide "non-partisan and fair enforcement," given my public statements that Shays-Meehan is bad legislation, likely to damage, rather than fix, the system. First, as a factual matter, I did not "lobby members of Congress." Indeed, I am embarrassed to report that I have not spoken to a single member of the House or Senate about the McCain-Feingold or Shays-Meehan bill since the former was taken up in the Senate last March. I did, in response to a congressional staff inquiry, send a letter to the House explaining my understanding of one part of the Shays-Meehan legislation. Would Mr. Noble have me refuse to provide Congress with my understanding of a law that I will be asked to enforce?

More to the point, Mr. Noble's comments indicate exactly the type of cynical approach for which I have criticized advocates of campaign-finance regulation. As Mr. Noble points out, my views on campaign-finance regulation were well known when I was nominated and confirmed by the Senate. I have now served 20 months on the commission, six of those working with Mr. Noble. Yet Mr. Noble cites no episode or case in which I have failed to enforce the law in a "non-partisan or fair" manner. This is exactly the type of cynical smear of our public officials that Americans should find repulsive. Unable to cite actual partisanship or unfairness on my part, Mr. Noble is perhaps concerned about the "appearance" of partisanship or unfairness. Of course, immediately upon leaving the FEC, Mr. Noble went to work as an advocate for a group promoting far-reaching changes in the law. Does this create the appearance that during Mr. Noble's 13 years as FEC general counsel he failed to act in a non-partisan or fair manner, in favor of promoting his own agenda? I am willing to stipulate here, publicly, that despite his strong personal views on what the law should be, I always found Mr. Noble to be a professional and dedicated public servant. Would that Mr. Noble returned the courtesy, or spoke plainly if he truly believes I have acted unfairly or in a partisan manner in carrying out my duties, so that I might defend myself against specific charges rather than innuendo.

A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

The cover line on your Feb. 25 issue, "Desert Rats: Confronting the Saudi Tyranny," appeared with a misleading photograph. Only one of the two gentlemen is Saudi. The other is H.H. Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar.

The accompanying article, "America's Unspecial Relationship," by Richard Lowry, is a critique of the relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. Without commenting on the views expressed in that piece, I assure you that they are not descriptive of the strong and mutually supportive relationship that exists between the U.S. and Qatar.

Bader Omar Al-Dafa, Ambassador
Washington, D.C.

THE EDITORS REPLY: *Many apologies. The cover line obviously should have been only "Desert Rat."*

IN DEFENSE OF AMERICORPS

In reference to Kate O'Beirne's piece, "Corps-Crazy" (Feb. 25), herewith a report from the AmeriCorps trenches: Not all of us volunteers are taking dollars from the feds.

Our local literacy project, funded in part by AmeriCorps dollars, was the first of its kind here in ten years. While I did not concern myself with the reasons the program sprang to life, I did know that AmeriCorps was somehow involved. Those dollars bought a liaison with the school district, and some pencils, paper, crayons, and folders. The 30-odd volunteers would have provided their own, had it come to that.

The available dollars did not take a salaried job from anybody else, did not go to waste, and taught maybe 100 Reservation kids to read. I taught three, the last an untapped genius, and it was frankly one of the biggest thrills of my life. It was like owning a magic carpet that you could give to anyone.

I know nothing of the workings or agenda of the GAO or Senator Whosit and care even less. I'm sure the article is factual, but it doesn't address the whole truth. Those persons did not watch the light of learning come into the eyes of these three little people who will one day be We the People.

AmeriCorps dollars bought something priceless in this rural neck of the woods, and that should strike conservatives as a meaningful use of their tax money. I'd trade three citizens who can read for any amount of HillaryCare.

James Raymond
Polson, Mont.

PROWLING THE WEB

Jay Nordlinger's article "Spam Tastes Gross" (Feb. 25) was a welcome sight. At least NATIONAL REVIEW recognizes the avalanche of filth that currently infects the Internet.

What went wrong? How could this great invention, which is able to deliver the world's knowledge right to our fingertips, end up becoming a haven for pedophiles?

The fact is that we do not have to look too far for the answer: Janet Reno apparently felt that Microsoft was the true embodiment of evil, and that it had to be stopped at all costs, even if it meant depleting the resources of the agencies charged with making it difficult for these monsters to abuse our children.

But then, what else could we possibly expect from such an administration?

Richard Zaparan
Brooklyn, N.Y.

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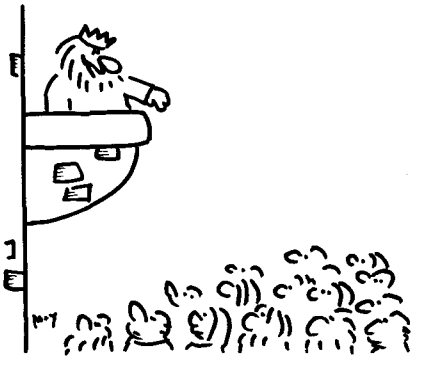
■ FOR THE RECORD ■

■ In Fox News poll, President **Bush**'s job-approval rating at 77 percent. . . . Bush tours DMZ in South Korea, learns that axes used by North Koreans to kill two servicemen in 1976 are displayed in Communist museum: "No wonder I think they're evil." . . . Bush, in address carried live on Chinese television: "Life in America shows that liberty, paired with law, is not to be feared. In a free society, diversity is not disorder. Debate is not strife. And dissent is not revolution. A free society trusts its citizens to seek greatness in themselves and their country." . . . Bush on welfare reform: "Many Americans, in **Bob Woodson**'s words, were injured by the helping hand. The welfare system became an enemy of individual effort and responsibility, with dependence passed from one generation to the next." . . . Bush on Social Security reform: "I want America to be an ownership society, a society where a life of work becomes a retirement of independence." . . . Bush stumps for Senate candidate **Elizabeth Dole** in North Carolina: "Somebody said to me the other day or actually asked me today, Am I going to campaign? And here we are in war. Do you think it's all right for the president to go campaign? I said, 'Yes, I do.'" . . . Washington speculates on which Bush cabinet member will be first to resign, with attention focused on **Norm Mineta** at Transportation, **Paul O'Neill** at Treasury, and **Tommy Thompson** at Health and Human Services.

■ Deputy defense secretary **Paul Wolfowitz**: "There is still a great deal of work to be done. I do fear the country has not absorbed that the conflict is far from over." . . . **Tom Daschle** criticizes war on terrorism: "I don't think the success has been overstated but the continued success, I think, is still very much in doubt.". . . White House press secretary **Ari Fleischer**: "It's never easy to guess what the motives are of the loyal opposition. Obviously, there's going to be politics involved. Some people may want to run for president." . . . **Jimmy Carter** on Bush's "axis of evil" statement: "The comment was overly simplistic and counterproductive. I think it will take years before we can repair the damage done by that statement." . . . Sen. **Robert Byrd** (D., W.Va.): "If we expect to kill every terrorist in the world, that's going to keep us going beyond doomsday. How long can we afford this?" . . . *Wall Street Journal* publisher **Peter Kann** on the killing of reporter **Daniel Pearl**: "His murder is an act of barbarism that makes a mockery of everything Danny's kidnappers claimed to believe in. They claimed to be Pakistani nationalists, but their actions must surely bring shame to all true Pakistani patriots." . . . In CBS News poll, 74 percent approve U.S. attack to try to remove **Saddam Hussein** from power. Also, 59 percent say war on terrorism won't be "won" unless **Osama bin Laden** is captured or killed. . . . Lt. Gen. **Ronald T. Kadish** says rudimentary missile-defense system capable of protecting against rogue attack from North Korea will be functional in 2004.



"Everybody move in real close—I want to try the diving-into-the-mosh-pit thing."

■ Sen. **John McCain** (R., Ariz.) on accepting donations from Global Crossing before it went belly-up, in AP: "I am tainted by this.". . . Winter Olympics leader **Mitt Romney** (R.) considers challenging Acting Gov. **Jane Swift** (R., Mass.) in primary, with *Boston Herald* poll showing Romney able to beat all five Democratic opponents and Swift losing to three and in a tie with two. . . . In South Dakota, Republican poll shows Rep. **John Thune** (R.) leading Sen. **Tim Johnson** (D.), 49 percent to 43 percent, in race GOP believes is best chance for defeating incumbent. . . . **James Charles Evers**, brother of **Medgar Evers** and former NAACP leader in Mississippi, on judicial nomination of **Charles W. Pickering Sr.**: "The NAACP and the Klan are the only two organizations that are against him down here right now." . . . Rep. **Eddie Bernice Johnson** (D., Texas), head of Congressional Black Caucus, on who will vote for Pickering: "a few Judases."

■ Democrats in Texas gubernatorial primary hold debate in Spanish. . . . Former Los Angeles mayor **Richard Riordan** on bilingual education: "It's worse than nonsense. It's downright evil." . . . Three in ten claims for earned-income tax credit are false or fraudulent, costing taxpayers $8.5 billion per year, according to IRS report requested by Rep. **Ernest Istook** (R., Okla.). . . "The point I remember so clearly is **Birch Bayh** is hurt himself and he had the choice of either going down the road to [get help] or coming back to the plane and trying to drag people out," says Sen. **Ted Kennedy** (D., Mass.), recalling 1964 plane crash, in *Roll Call*. "In your mind, [with] the dangers of a fire in the plane, when you're off in the woods by yourself, you wonder what kind of choices you'd make. He made the decision to come back to the plane. It didn't catch on fire, but it could have. It was a clear reflection of the quality of his character and courage."

■ Pakistani president **Pervez Musharraf** on the Islamic world, according to BBC: "Today we are the poorest, the most illiterate, the most backward, the most unhealthy, the most unenlightened, the most deprived, and the weakest of all the human race." . . . Russian foreign minister **Igor Ivanov** says Russia opposes military action against Iraq.

■ **Jay Leno** on *Tonight Show*: "Earlier today, **Mike Tyson** was given a license to box in Washington, D.C. Remember, Vegas turned him down last month. It's nice to know that Vegas has higher moral standards than Washington, D.C." **NR**

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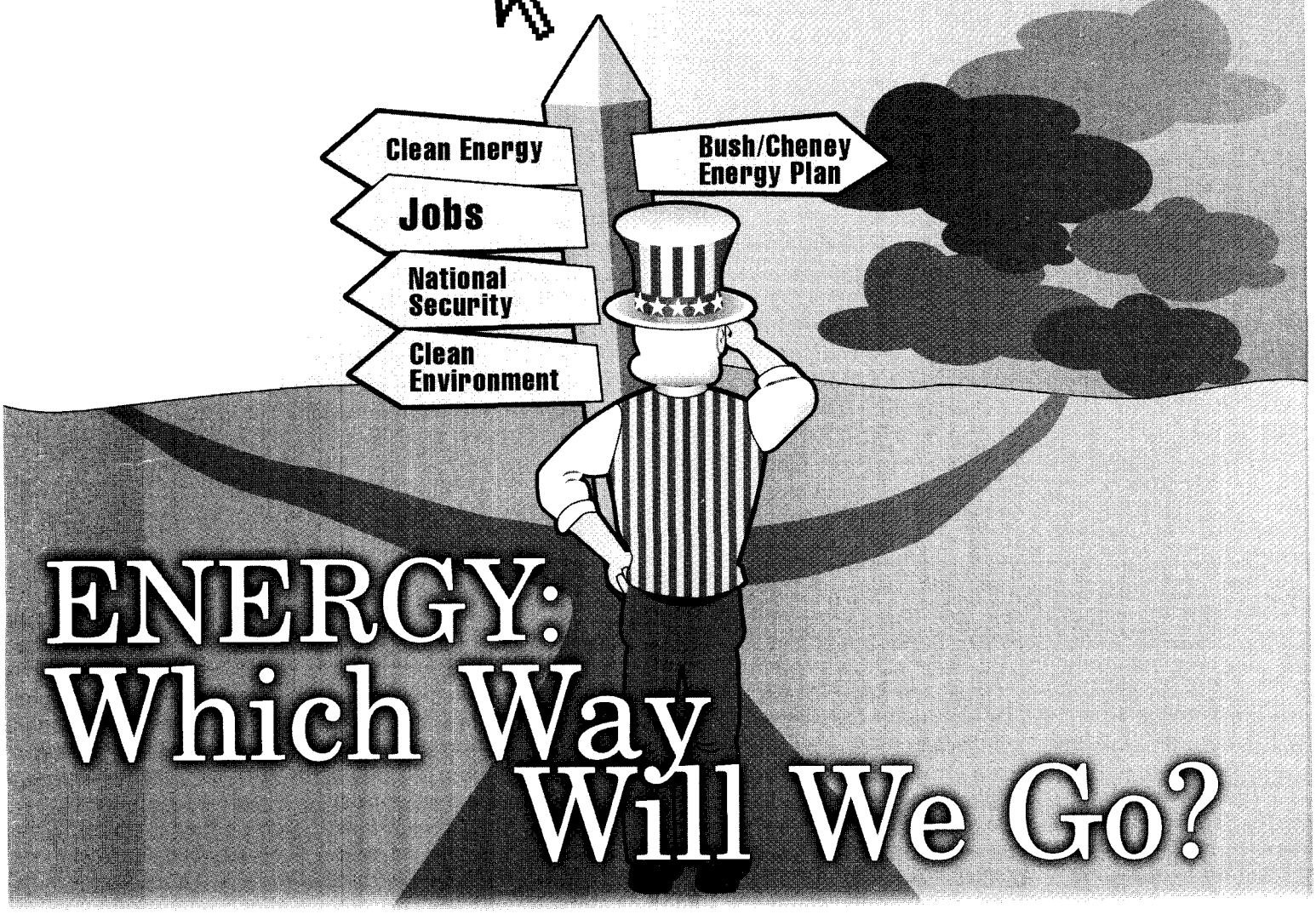

ENERGY: Which Way Will We Go?

Americans must choose an energy future. No decision facing us today has greater implications for the health of our economy, our communities, and the environment that sustains us.

Which way will we go?

The White House energy plan is a fraud, nothing more than payback for campaign contributions from oil, coal, gas and nuclear industry cronies. It would protect their profits and perpetuate their pollution at public expense.

In advocating their plan, President Bush, Vice President Cheney, and their allies in Congress demonstrate profound dishonesty and disloyalty to the genuine national interest.

If you think that's a harsh conclusion, read the "Clean Energy Blueprint" from the **Union of Concerned Scientists**, the **American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy**, and the **Tellus Institute** (online at **www.UCSUSA.org**).

The Blueprint weighs the costs and benefits of the "business-as-usual" approach embodied in the Bush plan against those of a package of common sense, clean-energy policies.

- Under the Bush plan, only 2.8 percent of our energy would come from clean, renewable sources by 2020 (compared to 2 percent today). Blueprint policies would increase that to 20 percent, pumping billions into the economy and creating jobs as a result.
- Compared to the Bush plan, implementing Clean Energy Blueprint policies would save consumers $440 billion between now and 2020, and $105 billion annually thereafter. The resulting pollution reduction would create additional savings – like improved public health that would lower insurance and medical costs.
- A former CIA director, a former national security advisor, and a former chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have endorsed policies included in the Blueprint because they enhance national security. The Bush plan doesn't.

Energy efficiency and renewable power development are in the nation's best interest – the Clean Energy Blueprint proves it. But Bush, Cheney and company, even as they claim to be public servants, put the interests of their cronies and contributors first. On energy, they're leading us down the wrong path.

TomPaine.com – Energy: Which Way Will We Go?
With excerpts from the Clean Energy Blueprint.

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THE WEEK

■ In a Middle East-wide poll, a full 18 percent of Arabs said they accepted that Arabs—not the Mossad, say—had perpetrated the attacks of Sept. 11. Well, at least it's in double digits.

■ The murder of journalist Daniel Pearl was notable for its details, and its theatricality. His murderers filmed him being forced to declare that he was a Jew, and themselves slitting his throat and displaying his severed head. The hatred of Jews is blatant; since Pearl was an American reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*, there was also an implicit equation in their minds of the United States with Judaism. The ritual elements of the murder remind us that at the heart of this conflict is the perversion of a religion. The terrorists' ritual worships murder, and promises more murder to come. In addition, the filming takes us back, beyond the horrors of the last century, to those of the French revolution. Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn often made the point in these pages that the French revolutionaries, unlike even the Nazis and the Communists, committed most of their murders in broad daylight, displaying the heads and body parts of their victims in celebratory rituals of solidarity. Now the world of Islamo-fascism revives their gory glee. As those monsters perished, so will these, if we see to it.

■ Conservative Bill Simon Jr. won the Republican primary to take on California governor Gray Davis in November. He beat former Los Angeles mayor Richard Riordan, who had been favored. But Riordan ran a lousy campaign. He was passionless, gaffe-prone, and insulting to conservatives. Davis was able to pummel him with ads that raised questions about his trustworthiness—one, for example, noted that he had flip-flopped on abortion. Riordan's defeat should retire the idea that he was the strongest potential Republican candidate against Davis: To be strong, he would have had to be able to get Republicans to vote for him. Davis now thinks he has a weak opponent in Simon, who has never held elective office. But Simon could be a formidable contender, so long as he doesn't let his primary victory go to his head. He didn't win so much as Riordan lost. If he exploits Davis's weaknesses, perhaps the same dynamic will work in his favor this fall.

■ There are times when the national interest demands that the government offer something other than brutal honesty about its activities and intentions. Prior to the Gulf War, the Pentagon released information suggesting it would launch an amphibious assault against Iraqi forces rather than the ground attack it actually employed, with the specific aim of deceiving Saddam Hussein. The war on terrorism surely will require similar measures, but one tool the military had hoped to use, the Office of Strategic Influence, won't be around to assist. Created in November, the OSI would have helped the Pentagon conduct information warfare. When internal documents suggested that it also might plant wholly false stories with foreign journalists to affect public opinion in other countries, however, the OSI suffered a deathblow to its credibility. Top officers stressed that they would never lie, but the damage was done. Donald Rumsfeld terminated the office. That move may have been a political necessity, but it does not obviate a military one to keep on confusing and frustrating our enemies.

■ Condoleezza Rice accepted an "Image Award" from the NAACP—gave a very nice speech, as usual. One can see the graciousness in accepting such an award—any award—but one can also see that such an acceptance enhances the respectability of an organization that has shown itself unworthy of respect. The NAACP, in addition to making itself militantly racialist, has taken on some of the characteristics of a hate group, as when it ran ads across the country in the 2000 election basically calling George W. Bush a party to a lynching. Rice might have done some good if she had said, "Thanks for thinking of me, but, based on who you have become, stick it, please." But then, it's hard for her to win: A "black-themed" comic strip called *The Boondocks* rapped the NAACP for honoring a Republican official at all.

■ The two Democratic candidates for governor of Texas, Dan Morales and Tony Sanchez, both trace their ancestry to Mexico, though both were raised in the Lone Star State. Recently they have been playing an unsightly game of more-Hispanic-than-thou. Sanchez wanted to hold two debates with Morales, one in English and the other in Spanish. Morales retorted that he would answer questions in that second debate both in English and in Spanish. Sanchez's camp thereupon put it about that Morales was less than confident of his fluency in Spanish. Morales then accused Sanchez of wishing to divide Texans by language. (And, reported the *New York Times*, "even appeared to be indirectly appealing to voters suspicious of the use of Spanish." Can there really be such bigoted voters? Imagine!) When the debate finally came off, bigot-friendly Mr. Morales translated his Spanish answers into English because "the vast majority of the citizens of our state speak English." This, averred Mr. Sanchez, was "a slap in the face" to Hispanics. Every one of whom, as Sr. Sanchez sees

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What Part of "No Law" Doesn't Congress Get?

David R. Henderson is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Suppose representatives of an industry pushed for a law giving them a monopoly on disseminating information about political campaigns and candidates. We would be outraged, right? Our outrage would be based on our belief in two important principles: first, that government should not grant monopolies, and second, that Congress should not violate freedom of speech and of the press.

It's time for outrage. Because the industry representatives have been pushing for such a law for years. And Congress is about to pass such a law. The industry: newspapers and broadcasters. The law: federal campaign finance "reform."

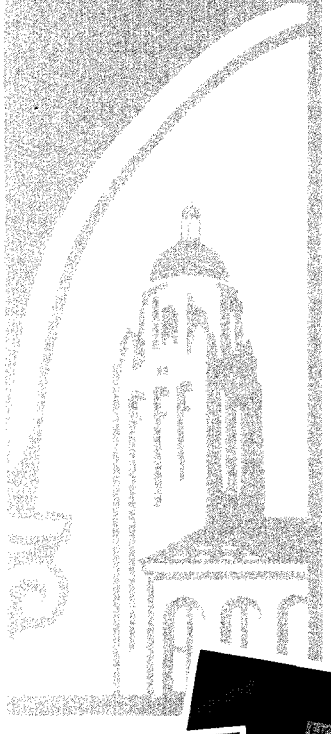
The new law would make it a crime for various groups to spend money advocating the defeat or election of a given candidate or ballot proposition. The restrictions apply to the thirty days immediately preceding a primary election and the sixty days preceding a general election. In other words, **competing voices are silenced when it matters most for them to be heard.**

So, for example, if a candidate had voted for restricting abortion or for restricting guns, neither a pro-choice group nor a pro–Second Amendment group would legally be able to spend money pointing these things out. During those thirty-day or sixty-day periods, by contrast, newspapers and broadcasters would still be free to report, fairly or unfairly, on the various candidates. Thus, the new law would give newspapers and broadcasters a monopoly on information. More accurately, it reduces competition—one of our saviors from the worst effects of this law will be the Worldwide Web.

You might say, "So what?" If you, like most of us, get tired of all the attack ads around election time, won't this law give a welcome relief? It might, although never underestimate the ability of smart people to get around restrictive laws. But even if it does give you relief, notice the cost of this relief. **The cost is our freedom of speech.** When the folks at the constitutional convention passed the First Amendment, they weren't trying to give free speech and freedom of the press only to people who were rich enough to own newspapers. They wanted everyone to have those freedoms so that people could speak out against whatever upset them. That's why they said, "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging freedom of speech." What part of "no law" does Congress not understand?

Ironically, the advocates claim that their goal is to keep money out of politics. It takes a lot of money to buy a newspaper or TV station. Peter Jennings, his producers, and his writers will have their say on TV every night. The rest of us, though, who are already legally prevented from giving more than $1,000 to a candidate's campaign ($2,000 under the new law), will be further limited. We might want to give to groups that support our views, but those groups will be prevented from voicing those views when it most matters. What the law really does is keep competing voices out of politics.

— David R. Henderson



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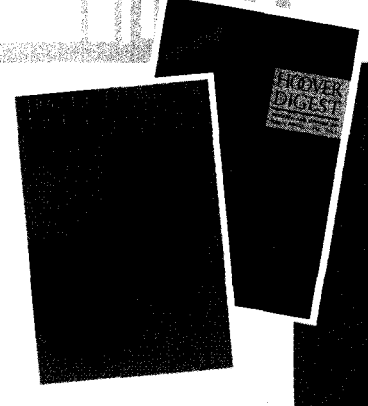

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it, would presumably prefer to remain trapped in a linguistic ghetto away from the mainstream of America's economic and political life, rather than assimilate to the nation's majority culture.

■ While declaring that free trade is "a cornerstone" of his agenda, President Bush announced new taxes on imported steel. These "temporary safeguards" come on top of the protectionist policies that already apply to 80 percent of imports. Bush's stated justification for these policies is that other countries subsidize their steel industries, encouraging overproduction and driving global prices down. American protectionism and subsidies over the years have, of course, had precisely the same effects. Rather than give the industry "an opportunity to adjust," as Bush says, the new aid will simply keep more inefficient producers in business. It will also hurt industries that use steel, which employ far more Americans than the steel producers do. It will make it harder for Bush to get other countries to form trade pacts with us, and may even inspire them to impose retaliatory tariffs against us. Bush was under a lot of pressure, since agitation for tariffs was coming from such key states as West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. (The tariffs are set to expire right after the next presidential election.) But one might have hoped that a president with sky-high approval ratings would look after the interests of the nation as a whole.

■ Congressional Republicans are eager to pass a bill giving senior citizens a guarantee that their Social Security benefits will never be cut. On retirement, people would get certificates from the secretary of the Treasury promising them a certain monthly benefit plus a cost-of-living adjustment. According to proponents, this certificate would establish a "property right" in Social Security benefits. In fact, the "guarantee" could not be made legally binding, since a future Congress would always be able to change the law; the only value of the certificates would be to raise the political cost of cutting benefits even higher than it already is. The point of Social Security reform, however, is to replace the promises of politicians with the true security that comes from personal ownership of real assets. The certificate idea is a defensive gimmick. Republicans should drop it and make the case for reform.

■ Two groups are running ad campaigns to persuade wavering senators to support a ban on all human cloning. The National Right to Life Committee is targeting Republican Orrin Hatch of Utah, while a new group called Stop Human Cloning—whose chairman is our friend Bill Kristol—aims its ads at the Democratic senators of North Dakota and Georgia, two of whom are up for reelection. The other side of the debate in the Senate wants to let human embryos be cloned so long as they are used for medical or research purposes and then destroyed. What that approach has going for it is the support of the biotech industry, of many people with illnesses that cloning might ameliorate, and of pro-abortion ideologues who cannot tolerate the notion that the law might protect any class of embryonic human beings—no matter how created—from destruction. What works in favor of a complete ban is the revulsion, rooted in sound moral argument, that most Americans feel about this sort of human experimentation. Which is why an ad campaign that takes the issue to the public is a good idea.

■ During the boom years of the Nineties, the nation's governors spent like there was no tomorrow. Real spending per person grew by a third between 1992 and 2001. Now that tomorrow has come, the states face a combined $40 billion shortfall. Rather than retrench, they want Washington to bail them out. That was the major theme of the recent meeting of the National Governors Association. A minor theme was the need to relax the work requirements in welfare programs, so that participation in job-training programs could count. Never mind the abundant evidence that government job training is a dead end. The NGA is also continuing its push for Congress to allow the states to set up a national system of Internet taxes. We at NR have a money-saving idea for the governors: Stop funding the NGA. It will save the states only a few million dollars, but you have to start somewhere.

■ Saudi Arabia's Middle Eastern peace plan—Israel returns to its pre-1967 borders, in return for normalized relations—has set journalists and diplomats on three continents fluttering. It offers a welcome change from the Palestinian murder-suicides, and the Israeli responses they provoke. But there are ample reasons for skepticism. The Saudis are waving the olive branch because they want to show the United States that they can do something besides attend American flight schools; Arafat professes to grasp a sprig of it because the Israelis have him barricaded in his house. Why should he negotiate in earnest? Ehud Barak, the previous Israeli prime minister, offered him almost the same deal in the waning days of the Clinton administration, which he scornfully rejected. Over the long run, what are the prospects for peace? As long as some Palestinians feel shortchanged, and some Arab countries see an advantage to themselves, terror will go on, whatever the Palestinian Authority and the Saudis decide (consider the fissiparous history of Irish republicanism). Israel occupies a strong tactical position within a problematic strategic position. Hence the indecisive carnage may continue for a long time.

■ Has Colombia turned a corner? President Andres Pastrana, who had ceded half his country to Marxist rebels fueled by drug profits, decided they were not serious peacemakers after all, and broke off talks with them. The rebels then showed they were serious warmakers, kidnapping and murdering prominent politicians and attacking the nation's power and water supplies. For years, the United States has given assistance to a feckless political class,

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A world of ideas on public policy.

Pharmaceutical Profits and the Discovery of New Medicines

by F. M. Scherer

Since the late 1950s, when the Kefauver Committee investigated the business practices of U.S. pharmaceutical companies, representatives of that sector have argued that its profits are an important stimulus to, and source of funding for, research and development – which in turn leads to a stream of health-enhancing new products. Although the argument is plausible on its face, quantitative evidence on the robustness of the linkage has been scarce. This article reports the results of a recent data analysis that yields surprising new insights on the connection between pharmaceutical profits and innovation.

Profitability and investments in R&D can, in principle, be linked in three rather different ways. First, successful R&D leads, with long and variable lags, to new products, which, depending upon their reception in the market, can add greatly to company profits. Second, the profits earned by a company serve as a source of funds to support R&D investment, and some managers are known to set R&D budgets using rules of thumb emphasizing an indicator of current cash flow or sales. Third, managers' expectations of future profit opportunities can exert a demand-pull influence on R&D investment.

In a recent study, I analyzed R&D outlays and profits at the aggregated industry level, using U.S. Census Bureau data on pharmaceutical manufacturing plants' gross margins – i.e., the surplus of revenues over in-plant production costs available to cover R&D costs along with depreciation, marketing costs, central office costs, debt service costs, income taxes, and net profits.

The growth rate of the pharmaceutical sector's deflated gross margins was 4.23 percent per year – much lower than the 7.51 percent growth rate found for R&D outlays. The disparity of growth rates implies a likely slackening of R&D growth rates in the future. If R&D were covered solely by domestic gross margins, continuation of growth trends experienced since 1962 would mean that R&D outlays would exceed gross margins in 2025. To be sure, profits from overseas sales also help to repay R&D costs, but since the United States is the largest single market for U.S. drug companies' products, retardation of R&D growth rates seems likely in the long run.

> ***The degree of coincidence between gross profits and R&D investment over the past forty years is surprisingly close***

Both R&D investment and the pharmaceutical sector's gross margins exhibit long swings around their exponential time trend. But the degree of coincidence between gross profits and R&D investment over the past forty years is surprisingly close. The association becomes clear when one computes the percentage deviations of actual R&D outlays and gross margins from their trends and juxtaposes the resulting series. This comparison shows that deviations from trend values rise and fall in tandem, confirming the persistence of a robust pattern between R&D investment and gross industry profitability. The swings are so closely correlated that it would be implausible to infer a chain of causation running from R&D to profits, since lags of ten to fifteen years from peak R&D spending to peak profitability for new products are typical.

Sensitivity tests revealed that these patterns persist when domestic R&D outlays, a time series available beginning only in 1970, are substituted for worldwide R&D outlays, and when fringe benefit outlays, reported by the Census Bureau beginning only in 1967, are not deducted in calculating gross margins.

Combined with evidence that profit rates of return on R&D investments tend to exceed risk-adjusted capital costs by only modest amounts, the pattern suggests that pharmaceutical R&D is best described by a virtuous rent-seeking model. That is, as profit opportunities expand, firms compete to exploit them by increasing investments, primarily in R&D, until the increases in costs dissipate most, if not all, supranormal profit returns.

If this is a correct interpretation of drug companies' behavior, it has obvious implications for policy interventions aimed at reducing the pharmaceutical sector's prices and profits. If governments attempt to limit public healthcare spending by imposing price controls on the pharmaceutical sector and suppressing its profitability, they risk undermining the ability of drug companies to fund the lengthy and difficult process of discovering and developing new medicines.

F. M. Scherer is Aetna Professor of Public Policy Emeritus at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and a lecturer in public affairs at Princeton University. *This article is adapted from "The Link Between Gross Profitability and Pharmaceutical R&D Spending," in* **Health Affairs** *(September/October 2001), pp. 216-220. The full article is available online at http://www.healthaffairs.org/archives_library.htm.*

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under the rubric of fighting the war on drugs. Colombia is in fact confronting a rebellion. Washington must decide how important the stability of Colombia is (the country has been in chaos for much of its history), and how willing its apparently sobered leadership is to defend itself. After answering these questions, it might make the case to the American people for assistance. It should proceed on the basis of hemispheric house-cleaning—not cross-border drug-busting.

■ The president acquitted himself well on his recent trip to China. In an address to students at one of the country's most prestigious universities, he spoke forthrightly about American values and principles. "In a free society . . . debate is not strife, and dissent is not revolution," he told them. "A free society trusts its citizens to seek greatness in themselves and in their country." He stood up for Taiwan, saying firmly that the Taiwan Relations Act obliges the U.S. to help Taiwan if that nation is attacked. He spoke of his own religious faith, and called for an end to religious persecution in China. Remarkably, the entire address was broadcast on nationwide TV—though on a Friday morning, when most Chinese were at work. The official transcript issued by the Chinese government was savagely censored: Even the president's praise for the firefighters and police officers of September 11 was excised, as were the above-quoted remarks and the calls for freedom of worship. The televising of the president's speech was a step forward, and we should be grateful for small mercies. It is still the case, however, that so long as the Chinese government cannot bear to let its citizens read the words of a U.S. president, relations between our two nations remain far from normal.

■ In Cuba, word got out that the people were welcome at the Mexican embassy. (Tragically, this proved not to be true.) They literally stormed the gates, begging for asylum, thus bringing the full force of Castro's police-state apparatus down on them: clubs, dogs, "rapid-response brigades," the works. In this way, the curtain was pulled back just a

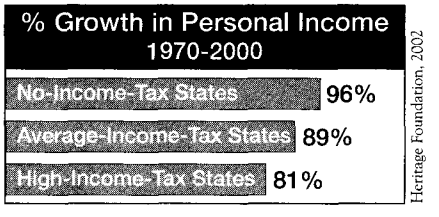
Taxes and Feet

George Gilder once noted that high tax rates don't redistribute income, they redistribute taxpayers. Population shifts among the states show that Americans do indeed "vote with their feet" by fleeing from high- to low-tax areas. That's an important lesson for state lawmakers to internalize as they combat their largest budget deficits in at least a decade.

But will they? The American Legislative Exchange Council reports that legislators in at least half the states are considering tax hikes to close multi-billion-dollar budget gaps. That's precisely what many governors did during the recession of the early 1990s. Governors like Lowell Weicker of Connecticut, Jim Florio of New Jersey, Mario Cuomo of New York, and Pete Wilson of California tried to stem the tide of red ink by raising taxes on the rich, but instead they only plunged their states into deeper recessions and bigger budget holes. Lots of rich folks who were supposed to pay the higher taxes packed up their families and their businesses and relocated to more tax-friendly locations—like North Carolina, Florida, and Nevada. Middle-class workers got stuck carrying the higher tax load.

Meanwhile, the states that cut taxes and flabby budgets in the early 1990s—states like Michigan under Gov. John Engler—came roaring out of the recession with strong growth. "No state can tax its way to prosperity," Engler preached back then. (Alas, Engler has forgotten his own formula for success. His latest budget suggests a number of new taxes, and he's also leading the charge among the governors for an Internet tax.)

The worst news of all from the states is that in the midst of the current fiscal crisis, several states without income taxes—including Alaska, New Hampshire, and Tennessee—are thinking of introducing one. They ought to look at a recent study by economist Daniel Mitchell of the Heritage Foundation. Mitchell found that eight states without an income tax—Florida, Nevada, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, and Wyoming—had substantially higher economic growth over the past 30 years than the states with the highest income taxes. Mitchell's findings were as follows:



Mitchell concludes that if these non-income-tax states adopted an income tax, they would be giving up their greatest economic advantage vis-à-vis their neighbors.

The news looks good in some states. Gov. Frank Keating of Oklahoma wants to put an initiative on his state's ballot this year abolishing the state income tax. And former congressman Mark Sanford, who is running for governor this year in South Carolina, has proposed a budget plan that would end that state's income tax by 2006. They understand what more governors should know by now: Soak-the-rich tax policies only cause the middle class to get wet.

—Stephen Moore

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little on the true nature of this regime—all the world could see it. Actually, not quite. In the attacks, a reporter and photographer from Reuters were beaten. The police took away one of their cameras. The state then forbade Reuters Television from broadcasting images of the incident to the world. So the world's press came down hard on Cuba, right? Wrong. Not a peep. Remember this the next time someone says that the press always rallies around its own.

■ It is now generally understood that fascism and communism, though different in their stated goals for society, shared essentially the same methods. The people of Hungary are especially well equipped to appreciate this truth, having suffered under both of those great political evils. The Hungarian government of conservative Viktor Orban has now opened a museum with the name "House of Terror," where visitors can view instruments of torture and hear recorded oral testimony from the victims of totalitarianism. Located in downtown Budapest, the museum occupies the very building where "enemies of the state" were tortured and killed under both the fascist regime of 1944–45 and the Communist government that followed. The opposition Hungarian Socialist Party, which has many links with apparatchiks of the old Communist government, has declared its intention, should it win the general election due in April, to change the name "House of Terror" to "House of Memory and Reconciliation." What, one wonders, is the Hungarian word for "weasels"?

■ Marmite, described on the product label as "yeast extract," is a favorite food of the British. A dark-brown mucilaginous substance with a taste something like a highly salted beef bouillon cube, Marmite can be spread on soldiers (that is, toast sliced into strips for dipping into the yolk of a decapitated boiled egg) or crumpets (not to be confused with pikelets, of course), or can be dissolved in hot water to make an invigorating drink. This year is the 100th anniversary of Marmite's creation, in commemoration of which a motion has been placed before the House of Commons urging parliamentarians to "take intense satisfaction from the essential Britishness of the product and its lack of appeal for the majority of the world's population." Is it uncharitable of us to note that date, and to wonder if perhaps there may be explanations of Britain's grand imperial decline yet unexplored by historians?

■ In the women's bobsled event at the Winter Olympics, the gold medal was won by an American team, Jill Bakken and Vonetta Flowers. Miss Flowers is the first black person ever to win a Winter Olympics gold. This simple fact threw news commentators into confusion. Because they can no longer say "black," owing to the current PC, they had no way of reporting the truth of the situation. Their tongues were tied. Some were reduced to declaring that Miss Flowers was "the first African American *from any country* to win gold at the Winter Olympics." How envious they must be, all those African Americans from other countries!

■ In the 75 years that the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has been handing out Oscars, only six black actors and actresses have won, and only one—Sidney Poitier in 1963—has ever been voted Best Actor. This year, two nominees for Best Actor are black, as is a leading nominee for Best Actress. Pondering the dearth of black awardees in the past, Will Smith, who is one of these current hopefuls, observed that the Academy ignores black performances "because most of the 8,000 members are white, and you vote for what you associate with. If black people are voting, then a black person will probably win. If a Chinese person is voting, then a Chinese person will probably win. It's not racism. It's what we relate to." Mr. Smith's observations may not be racism, either, but they surely betray a very dim view of human nature. Doesn't he think that any Academy members will vote, or ever have voted, the Best Actor award to the person who is just . . . best actor?

■ Last September, a team at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston operated on a fetus with hypoplastic-left-heart syndrome, a condition that often spurs parents to abort. By his birth in November, "Jack G." was found to have two functioning ventricles where, without the surgery, he would have had only one. Cardiologist Stanton Perry speculated that Jack's age at the time—23 weeks—could explain the surgery's astonishing success. As in utero procedures are conducted at earlier and earlier stages of life, pro-choice activists may even have to forsake their favorite phrase, "meaningless blob of protoplasm." Last July, for instance, *The New York Times Magazine* ran a photograph of a surgeon's gloved fingers holding the hand of then-24-week-old Abigail Hasten as it protruded from her mother's womb. Abigail's tiny, visibly human hand was clearly not "just a blob of cells"—and so the *Times* staff tactfully captioned it: "Dr. Joseph Bruner with [mother] Kelly Hasten's uterus." In 1998, Stanley Fish observed that

For Mr. Bush

With troops in Georgia far from where
Miss Scarlett flirted, Daschle's glare—
Empurpled, with distended veins—
Suggested amour propre *pains.*
He's sensitive; he feels ignored,
So please, before his Senate horde
Descends on Condi, have him in
Then toy with Tom's adrenalin.

—W. H. von Dreele

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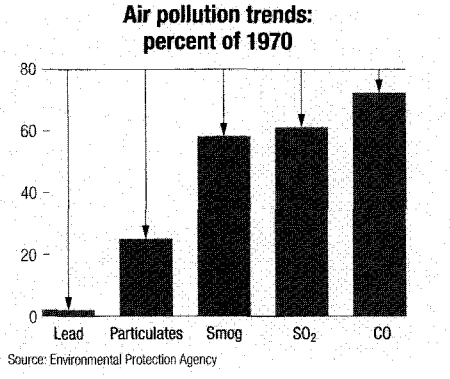
The broken link

Many still hold the view that as the United States' industrial economy continues to grow, as the number of cars continues to rise, and as the number of miles driven sets new records, there will be an ongoing deterioration in air quality. In other words, there is inevitably a perverse link between economic growth and environmental quality.

In fact, a recent poll conducted by the Wirthlin research firm found that two-thirds of Americans believe that our air quality has been getting worse. Fortunately, it just ain't so.



The latest evidence comes from the Foundation for Clean Air Progress (FACP), a nonprofit group founded to educate the public about the nation's air quality. FACP looked closely at U.S. government data over three decades and found extremely encouraging improvements.

Here's what has gone up: energy consumption (41 percent); U.S. population (38 percent); employment (70 percent); licensed drivers (71 percent); vehicle registrations (99 percent); vehicle miles traveled (148 percent); growth in the economy in inflation-adjusted terms (158 percent).

And air quality measures? Five of the six most important have improved.

Lead has dropped 98 percent; particulates 75 percent; smog-causing compounds 42 percent; sulfur dioxide 39 percent; and carbon monoxide 28 percent. In the three-decade period, only nitrogen oxides have risen, but much less than the growth in economic indicators, and even these pollutants have recently begun to fall.

The improvement has been so dramatic that air quality "exceedances" in Southern California have fallen to less than 40 days a year, about 60 percent lower than the number seen just a decade ago.

These encouraging results have not been confined to the U.S., of course. Other areas of the world, such as Europe, have also experienced dramatic improvements in air quality.

How has this been accomplished? In the U.S. we have seen more than three decades of effort devoted to reducing pollution and cleaning up the air. In this period there have been concerted efforts by both the public and private sectors to reduce emissions and to improve vehicle mileage. Very large investments in advanced equipment and new technology have been required. Here, as in other parts of the world, we have learned how to produce more, to do it differently, and to do it better.

Recent air quality measurements provide unassailable evidence that energy growth and rising material prosperity need not have an adverse effect on **any** aspect of environmental quality. This provides a clear example where an environmental challenge once thought intractable is being overcome. It demonstrates that progress is possible as long as there is a determined and cooperative effort involving both public and private sectors, harnessed to the power of advanced technology

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"pro-life arguments are now based on scientific evidence and the pro-choice arguments are not." With pro-choicers now pretending that uteri have hands, can anyone still doubt he was right?

■ There are few acknowledged sins in Marin County, Calif., but George H. W. Bush seems to have committed one when he described John Walker Lindh as "some misguided Marin County hot-tubber." This show of "a deep prejudice against a progressive community" (the words of a county supervisor) provoked an uproar. The *Marin Independent Journal* published letters from more than 40 incensed residents, prompting Bush to pen a humorous mea culpa: "Call off the dogs please. I surrender. I apologize. I am chastened and will never use 'hot tub' and 'Marin County' in the same sentence again. . . . Now your readers have attacked me on my granddaughters, on my residence, on abortion, on Enron, on my being a Texan and on my pronunciation of Marin. You name it, a lot of angst has surfaced, and it's all my fault. Though I only garnered 23 percent of the vote in Marin in 1992, I was your President and I should have known better. I apologize to those who supported me that were offended, and I also apologize to the unenlightened who did not support me. I will now soak in my own hot tub and try to be more sensitive to the feelings of others—not John Walker Lindh, though."

■ There's a new *Our Town* in New York City—and it's not your father's *Our Town*. Oh no: The role of the Stage Manager is taken by a ninth-grade girl. The director, Jack Cummings III, explained, "I do not believe that audiences would welcome—the way they did [before]—an older white male lecturing to them on the ways of the world with a nod and a wink." The *New York Times* critic, Anita Gates, quickly chimed in, "That may be true for some audiences, but an older black man or an older black woman could have made that point while maintaining the weight of hard-earned wisdom." So, you see, you can have a ninth-grade girl—even white—play the part. Or you can have an "age-appropriate" black man or woman play it. But *for God's sake* you must not have an "older white male"—as Cummings III puts it—play the part. What would Thornton Wilder say? For that matter, what would Cummingses I and II say?

■ The video *Ten People Remunerated to Masturbate*, on show at the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham, England, recently drew criticism from a city councilor who pointed out that it's, well, a video of ten people being remunerated to masturbate. Deirdre Alden's call to ban children from being admitted was seconded by a representative of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, who called the installation, by one Santiago Sierra, "totally inappropriate." But gallery director Jonathan Watkins defends it: "This work is not about exciting people . . . it's making a serious point about the exploitation of people in the sex industry in the Third World." Sierra regularly makes similar points by giving refugees and prostitutes meager sums to perform "repetitive, obtrusive, and often pointless" tasks. Previous works include the riveting *Person Remunerated to Remain Tied Down to a Wooden Block* (2001), the somewhat more ambitious *68 People Remunerated to Block a Museum's Entrance* (2000), and on a grander scale still, *133 People Remunerated to Have Their Hair Dyed Blond* (2001). Unfortunately, the work we'd most like to see—*Contemporary Artist Remunerated to Get a Real Job*—is not expected to appear anytime soon.

■ Monica Lewinsky starred in an HBO "special" in early March, explaining herself at 95-minute length to a sympathetic audience, the whole thing filmed in artsy black and white. What comes to mind here is the ditty current in the streets of London in 1820 when the adulterous, crude, and hygienically-challenged Caroline of Brunswick returned from exile to claim her constitutional rights (though not her conjugal ones) from her husband, the newly-enthroned George IV. Ran the ditty: "Most gracious Queen, we thee implore, To go away and sin no more; Or if this effort be too great, To go away at any rate."

■ The sad story of the Kiss Kiss Mistletoe Bears captivated our readers when we first reported it (The Week, Jan. 28). These little stuffed toys come in pairs, boy and girl, with magnets in their noses. Put boy next to girl, and they kiss. Our story concerned a Christmas shopper who found a boy bear with its magnet wrongly polarized—a state of affairs that, for personal reasons, pleased the customer very much . . . until the store refused to separate two boy-girl pairs for him. That was by no means the end of the matter. *The Advocate*, a magazine for homosexuals, recently ran a report of a lady trying to buy two boy bears for one of her grandchildren—it was Valentine's Day. Like our earlier victim, she was thwarted. In a follow-up exchange with Hallmark, which markets these toys, *The Advocate* received a reply much more forthright and robust than we have come to expect from corporate America, asserting that people with eccentric tastes should not expect to be able to satisfy them with mass-produced articles designed for the general market. "It is not true," Hallmark pointed out, "that every product is appropriate for every gift occasion." Ah, the cool sweet breeze of common sense.

■ Conservatives who made the rollback tour to Jonas Savimbi's headquarters in the Angolan bush during the mid Eighties found a guerrilla leader of intelligence and personal force. They also found a movement with disturbing features: omnipresent portraits of the leader; young people doing joy-from-strength calisthenics; maimed victims of Savimbi's opponents, paraded for midnight press conferences. Savimbi, however, was the instrument at hand for resisting Soviet/Cuban imperialism in Africa—yes, such things were happening less than two decades ago—and the Reagan

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administration made good use of him. When Communism collapsed, its former clients and Savimbi kept up their death ballet, the former fueled by oil revenues, the latter by diamond smuggling. Death came to him in a jungle ambush, at age 67. R.I.P.

■ Our associate editor Kathryn Jean Lopez is featured in the April issue of *Playboy*. We'd better explain: In the Oct. 23, 2000, issue of NR, Lopez had a piece on the increasing radicalization of the Girl Scouts ("The Cookie Crumbles"). The current *Playboy* has a piece saying that this article "fueled" a wave of social-conservative attacks on the venerable body. But we just like saying that phrase: "Kathryn Jean Lopez is featured in the current *Playboy*."

THE WAR

Staying the Course

THE Afghan phase of the war on terror has been so successful that some people seem to be forgetting what President Bush told us at the beginning: The war is going to be long and hard. If our enemies were massed on a field, we could fight them in the open and be done. But they are terrorists, everywhere and nowhere. We have to flush them out and then pounce. Sometimes we will pounce and miss; sometimes we will pounce mistakenly. When we are finished—which is to say, when they are finished—there will be no signing ceremony. We will have to be patient, alert, and resolute.

These qualities are not as pervasive among our political elites as one might wish. Now that we are sending troops to Yemen, the Philippines, and ex-Soviet Georgia, Democratic senators—Daschle, Byrd, Hollings—are complaining that we are losing "focus" and "direction," that the war is expanding and becoming "open-ended." Daschle carps that Osama bin Laden has not yet been captured or killed. The administration has moved some federal workers to an undisclosed location so that the government may continue to operate in the event of nuclear attack, and recent news reports suggest the possibility that al-Qaeda may have the ability to set off at least a "dirty bomb" with radioactive material. Yet the *New York Times*'s Maureen Dowd greeted the news of the existence of a shadow government with a riff about Bush's "twin obsessions with secrecy and self-perpetuation." She writes, "Now Mr. Cheney is Lord of the Rings, ruling over his very own Moria, an underground kingdom of bureaucratic hobbits and orcs." Perhaps the Pulitzer board should start a new prize for clever writing about nuclear attacks on America.

While capturing or killing bin Laden is certainly desirable, President Bush has correctly insisted throughout this conflict that it is not our goal. Our goal is that those who would do us harm be killed, disabled, or deterred. Achieving that goal is an "open-ended" commitment because this is not a war of our choosing, and our enemies hide.

It might be helpful were Bush to explain, again, the war we are in. The war requires political support; that takes persuasion, and persuasion takes repetition. But it is also possible that the Democrats, moved by political mischievousness or liberal convictions, will stop supporting the war anyway—bugging out after a strong start, their pattern in the Cold War.

It is certainly appropriate to raise questions about administration policy; we'll do it ourselves, if it begins to appear that the administration has not summoned the political will to move against Iraq. But if the Democrats stake out a position substantively different from that of the administration, they had better be able to defend it. If they criticize Bush, they should expect to be criticized in turn—and Republicans will have every right to ask voters to choose sides. Republicans need not and should not imply that the Democrats are disloyal or unpatriotic. Pointing out that their policies are unwise and dangerous will suffice.

PROFILING

Better Safe

DID 3,000-plus Americans have to die on Sept. 11? In early March, the *Washington Post* reported that nine of the 19 hijackers were given special scrutiny when they arrived at the airports for their murderous assignments. Three showed irregularities in their tickets or their IDs; six matched FAA criteria for special attention. In other words, they were profiled.

But, as the *New York Times* reported the following day, none of the nine were questioned or personally searched. Only their checked luggage was given an extra look. Since their box-cutters were not in their suitcases, they passed with flying colors. This was partly fighting the last battle—terror attacks on airplanes in the Eighties and Nineties had featured bombs in the baggage hold. But it was also the result of our insistence on avoiding any personal unpleasantness—especially unpleasantness that might have an ethnic or racial basis.

As Richard Lowry explained in NR ("Profiles in Cowardice," January 28), the federal government in the Nineties chose to forego manual screening since it could be "perceived . . . as discrimination against citizens on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin or gender," as the FAA put it. Now, as anyone who has taken a flight since Sept. 11 knows, we have pat-downs and shoe checks galore. But still no security screener dares to exercise special care because a passenger is, say, a Saudi.

This suits the personal agenda of transportation secretary Norman Mineta. The TransSec, who is a Japanese-American, was interned with his family when he was ten years old. During the Gulf War, Mineta, then a big wheel on the House Public Works and Transportation Committee, warned against "mistaken assumptions about national security" that "may be implemented without properly protecting the rights of individuals." Government agencies must never "put expedience ahead of constitutional safeguards." Now,

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"the rights of individuals" was code for the self-esteem of groups; is it merely expedient to try to save lives? Mineta is still up to his old tricks. "A very basic foundation to all of our work," he says today, "is to make sure that racial profiling is not part of it."

Mineta-ism infects even people who are not former victims of 50-year-old injustices. When an Arab-American Secret Service agent was bumped to a later flight, because there were problems with the paperwork for his pistol, President Bush himself said he'd be "mad as heck" if the agent's ethnicity had anything to do with it. Modern American racial sensitivities have led us to a corrupt version of the old Roman maxim, *Fiat justitia, ruat coelum* (Let justice be done, though the heavens fall): Let the PC protocols be obeyed, though thousands die.

Rep. John L. Mica, reacting to the news about the nine who got away, said that our security personnel need to "go after the bad guys and not just the bad objects." Even so, bad guys will elude our detection. But the paradigm shift must be made, especially since airport security is not our only vulnerability. Weapons of terror and mass destruction can be brought to their targets in a hundred ways. We have to hunt for the likely couriers—and not be shy about flagging possibly innocent people when our suspicions are legitimately aroused.

■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Please tell the Rev. Born, whose letter about the Bronx appeared in the Jan. 28 issue, that it's no mystery to me how the "cks" elided into "x." I think it happened because of careless reading or dyslexia. With the correct spelling of our last name before them, people frequently address us as Mr. & Mrs. Franks. They seem to transpose the *c* and *k* and make the *c* sibilant. It's also difficult to get our name spelled correctly, but that's another story.

Sincerely,
Suzanne Franck
Hockessin, Del.

Dear Mrs. Franck: Well, I sympathize. But then . . . you could consider respelling your name!

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Was the salutation "Dear Rev. Born" (Jan. 28) a clever, if abstruse, joke or were you confusing a title of honor with a title of office? Would you address your junior senator "Dear Hon. Clinton"? Perhaps Mr. Born did not indicate his clerical office, so you followed the Jesse Jackson rule: Use Rev. when the person addressed wishes to be honored but seems to hold no office.

Yours sincerely,
Jack M. Bethards
San Francisco, Calif.

Dear Mr. Bethards: Quite right. The wild misusage does indeed corrupt.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Yale University Professor Smith's revisionist definition of "Country" perfectly exemplifies the doublespeak on parade ("Searching for God and Man at Yale," Dec. 31). With acuity, you estimate the situation here on the ground.

Even the term "American Revolution" has a new—false and ominous—definition among some at Yale. In the 1960s, hip youth insisted that adults should step aside, as Bob Dylan sang, to "get out of the road if you can't lend a hand."

Today the parade of nastiness proceeds at a faster clip: Recently one of my classmates tunelessly stated, "There are a lot of people in the way of the revolution, and if we don't want to wait for them to get old and die, we'll probably have to kill them."

In 2002, Yale's American patriots are we who stand in the way of "revolution."

Sincerely,
David Magram, Yale '03
New Haven, Conn.

Dear Mr. Magram: But will your classmates grow up? Some of mine did.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: In the Dec. 3 issue, Prof. Richard Leed of Cornell University writes to celebrate a trick of language that he calls "the adverbial adjective" and pleasingly illustrates some from the writing of P. G. Wodehouse, e.g., "As I sat in the bath tub, soaping a *meditative foot* . . ."

But the figure, although admirably suited to English, is not "peculiarly English." It dates back to the classics and goes by the Greek term "hypallage," meaning "transferred epithet." In his brilliant edition of the Latin poem *De Abbatibus*, Alistair Campbell remarks, "This trope is ever liable to deceive the best scholars. Neither learning nor experience always avails against it, and Bentley and Housman alike had moments when they failed to recognize it."

But luck can help when learning and experience falter. I used to teach a work that describes lovers lying "together in naked bed." "I will give all the change in my pocket," I once declared to a class, "to anyone who can tell me which figure of speech occurs here, whereby the bed—not the couple—is described as naked."

A student raised a meditative hand. "Could it be hypallage?" she asked. "Yes," I said, "but how in heaven did you know that?" "Well, the person I bought the book from had your course and wrote the word in the margin. You don't have to pay me."

But I did, with happy coins.

Yours sincerely,
J. R. Hall
University of Mississippi
University, Miss.

Dear Professor Hall: A wonderful story! And hypallaging we will go.

Cordially,

—WFB

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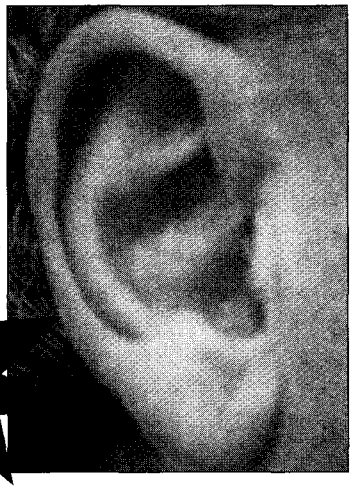

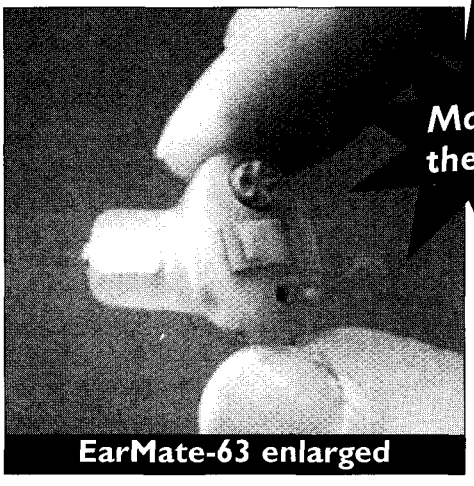

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■ POLITICS ■

A People's Constitution

Not just for nine Americans to read, and to follow

RAMESH PONNURU

OPPONENTS of the campaign-finance bill are arguing that President Bush should veto it because it is unconstitutional. In making this case for a veto, the opponents have raised a question whose importance transcends the particular constitutional dispute at hand: namely, does the president have a duty to make judgments about constitutional disputes in the first place?

These days, we tend to regard the protection of the Constitution as the exclusive business of the Supreme Court. Indeed, the Constitution is regularly assumed to be identical to the Court's interpretations of it. Politicians and journalists say that policies are "unconstitutional" when all they really mean is that the Court has held those policies to be unconstitutional. But there is an older understanding of the Constitution that holds that responsibility for its protection is shared. If Bush were to veto the campaign-finance bill as a violation of the First Amendment, he would take a small step toward restoring that sound, but now dormant, understanding.

The modern view has informed both sides of the campaign-finance debate. Supporters of the bill have said that neither legislators nor the president need worry about possibly unconstitutional provisions because the Supreme Court will sort them out. Opponents have rightly suggested that anyone who considers a bill unconstitutional should vote against it; but too often their argument that the bill *is* unconstitutional has relied solely on a prediction that the Court would strike it down. That argument is incomplete without any showing that the Court would be right to do so.

Andrew Sullivan provides a striking instance of the hold that judicial supremacy has on the minds of even thoughtful political commentators. Writing in opposition to conservatives who are urging a veto, he observes that these same conservatives want Congress to pass restrictions on abortion that they know the courts may well strike down. How, he asks, can they then demand that Bush veto a bill merely because it might "turn out to be" unconstitutional?

Bush with Constitution by Roman Genn

Note the quick, unexamined move from a discussion of the Constitution to a discussion of the courts. To frame the matter this way is to ignore the possibility that conservatives may act on constitutional judgments independent of the courts. Conservatives can try to ban partial-birth abortion because they know it is constitutional to do so, whatever the courts have said or may say later; and they can try to block campaign-finance regulations because they hold them to be unconstitutional.

Sullivan's argument works only if the Constitution is whatever the Supreme Court says it is—so that, for example, the statement "this bill is unconstitutional" is equivalent to the prediction that "the Supreme Court will strike down this bill." That's an argument with a fine pedigree: Support for it can be found in the writings of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., and (arguably) in the Court's 1958 case *Cooper* v. *Aaron*. But it makes unintelligible the notion that the Court can get the Constitution wrong, and thus also makes unintelligible dissents and overrulings.

The alternative view distinguishes between the Constitution and the Supreme Court's case law. Presidents and legislators swear an oath to uphold the former. But a constitutionalist political culture is hard to sustain if the Constitution is held to be the exclusive property of an unelected elite. In that case, lawmakers will not look to the Constitution when doing their jobs—a phenomenon all too evident in the campaign-finance debate. A judicial monopoly on constitutional interpretation poses the additional danger of reducing the Constitution to a mere grant of judicial power.

Political scientist Matthew Franck has noted that in the debates over ratification of the Bill of Rights, there is no record that the topic of judicial enforcement of it ever came up. Evidently, to a large extent its value was to codify principles that could be invoked in political debate and used to guide political action.

George Washington used the Constitution in just this way when he vetoed a bill he regarded as incompatible with it. Other presidents, too, have claimed a role in constitutional interpretation beyond merely being the chief selector of judges. Andrew Jackson famously vetoed the re-authorization of the Second Bank of the United States because he had constitutional objections. "Each public officer who takes an oath to support the Constitution swears that he will support it as he understands it, and not as it is understood by others," he said in his veto message.

Abraham Lincoln also believed presidents should make constitutional judgments independent of the courts. Supreme Court decisions, he said in his first inaugural address, should be considered binding on the parties to a case and deserve "very high respect and consideration in all parallel cases by all other departments of the government." But if the other branches had in every case to defer to the Court's constitutional judgment, "the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having, to that extent, practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal."

More recently, Ronald Reagan's attorney general Ed Meese made a version of Lincoln's argument. Much of the reaction was hysterical ("a calculated assault

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Arabian Fables (II)

More fanciful Arab myths to sway world opinion.

Earlier this year, we published our message, "Arabian Fables (I)," in which we made clear how the Arab propaganda machine creates myths and lies with which to misinform the world. We discussed the myths of the "Palestinians" and of the "West Bank" and the mythical concept of "occupied territories." In today's message, we shall address three more of these myths.

What are some of these myths?

Jerusalem ("Arab East Jerusalem"). The Arabs have assiduously propagated the myths that Jerusalem is an Arab capital, that (after Mecca and Medina) Jerusalem is their third holy city, and that it is intolerable to them that infidels (Jews) are in possession of it.

The reality of course is that Jerusalem was never an Arab capital and that it was, until the Jews revitalized it, a dusty provincial city that hardly played any economic, social, or political role. Jerusalem is mentioned hundreds of times in the Jewish Bible and has been the center of the Jewish faith and the focus of Jewish longing ever since the Romans destroyed the Temple in the early years of the first millenium. Not once is Jerusalem mentioned in the Koran.

> "The Arab propaganda machine has created myths that have been accepted by much of the world. No peace in the Middle East is possible until those Arab myths have been exposed for what they are!"

As to "East Jerusalem": There is East Saint Louis, there is East Hampton, and there used to be East Berlin, but, until the Arab propaganda machine created the concept, *there was never in history an* "East Jerusalem," let alone an "Arab East Jerusalem."

The eastern part of Jerusalem is now predominantly inhabited by Arabs, though their proportion is decreasing. But what is the reason for this? It is because the Jordanians destroyed all traces of Jewish presence from the eastern part of the city and drove all the Jews out during the 19 years (between 1948 and 1967) in which they were in occupation of the eastern part of the city. The world, informed by Arab propaganda, considers those Jews who wish to return to the eastern part of the city to be troublemakers or worse.

The concept of Jerusalem being a holy Arab city and the capital of whatever political entity the "Palestinians" may eventually form is a myth and so of course is the concept of "Arab East Jerusalem."

"**Settlements.**" When Jordan came into possession of Judea/Samaria and the eastern part of Jerusalem, following the invasion of the newly-formed Jewish state, and stayed in occupation for 19 years, it systematically obliterated all Jewish villages in the area under their occupation, drove out the Jewish inhabitants, and left the area "judenrein" (free of Jews) – the first time that concept had been applied since the Nazis created it during their short and bloody reign in Germany. When the Israelis recovered these territories, they rebuilt these villages, created new ones, and built new towns and suburbs to existing cities, especially Jerusalem.

The Arabs decided to call these towns and villages "settlements," with their connotation of illegitimacy and impermanence. The world, including the United States, is much agitated over these population centers and, goaded by the Arabs, declares them to be impediments to peace. What nonsense! Nobody considers the tens of thousands of Arabs who continue to stream to these territories as impediments to peace. The term "settlements," too, is a propaganda myth created by the Arabs. "**Refugees.**" In 1948, when six Arab armies invaded the Jewish state in order to destroy it on the very day of its birth, broadcasts by the advancing Arab armies appealed to the resident Arabs to leave their homes so as not to be in the way of the invaders. As soon as the "quick victory" was won, they could return to their homes and would also enjoy the loot from the Jews, who would have been driven into the sea. It didn't turn out quite that way. Those Arabs who, despite the urgings of the Jews to stay and to remain calm, foolishly left, became refugees. Those who decided not to yield to those blandishments are now, and have been for over 50 years, citizens of Israel, with all the same rights and privileges as their Jewish fellows.

But what happened to those refugees – by best estimates about 600,000 of them? Did their "Arab brethren" allow them to settle in their countries, to work, and to become productive citizens and useful members of their societies? No! They kept and still keep them, their children, their grandchildren, and in some cases even their great-grandchildren, in miserable "refugee camps," so that they can be used as political and military pawns in order to keep the burning hatred against Israel alive and in order to supply the manpower for the unremitting fight against Israel.

During those more than fifty years, Israel has taken in more than three million Jewish immigrants from all parts of the world and has integrated them productively into its society. According to the "Palestinians," the Arab "refugees" have now marvelously increased to five million(!). It is the intent and fervent desire of the Arabs that all of them should return to Israel so as to destroy the country without the necessity of war.

The "refugees" are a red herring and another myth created by the Arab propaganda machine.

The Arab propaganda machine, aided by the most high-powered public relations firms in the United States and all over, has created myths that, by dint of constant repetition, have been accepted as truth by much of the world. No sensible discussion, no peace in the Middle East, is possible until those Arab myths have been exposed for what they are.

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on the idea of law in this country," wrote *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis). But even liberals who detested Meese conceded that much of his argument was sound—as law professor Sanford Levinson did in the left-wing magazine *The Nation*. And not even Meese's critics disputed that congressmen should vote against a bill, and presidents veto it, if they judge it unconstitutional.

Even now, the notion of independent constitutional judgment by the executive lives on in weakened form. The first President Bush vetoed a campaign-finance bill in part because he thought it violated the First Amendment. The older understanding survives among liberals too, as John Ashcroft discovered when he moved to stop assisted suicide in Oregon. Ashcroft wanted to enforce the nation's drug laws, which preclude the prescribing of lethal drugs. His critics said that in this case the drug laws exceed the federal government's constitutional powers—even though the Supreme Court had never so ruled. What they wanted, though they did not say it, was for the executive branch to reach that constitutional judgment itself.

Legislators, too, must make constitutional judgments. Sen. John McCain has concluded that the campaign-finance bill is constitutional. The merits of his case aside, given his own understanding he can in good conscience work to pass the bill—whatever the Supreme Court ends up doing.

If President Bush signs the bill, he will have no such defense. In the month of his inauguration, he said that he regarded key provisions of the bill as unconstitutional and would therefore veto it. Those provisions are still there. If he still believes that the bill is unconstitutional, he cannot in good conscience do anything but veto it. Even if he thinks it is a close call, he should err on the side of not doing damage to the Constitution unless the bill is vitally necessary, which is clearly not the case here.

Perhaps Bush now believes the bill to be constitutional. If so, he should explain his change of heart. Offering such explanations is a way to involve the public too in constitutional judgments. The Constitution is not the property of judges and lawyers alone, or even of politicians. We the People also have a constitutional role to play. **NR**

■ **POLITICS II** ■

Arab American in Chief

(And a big Democrat, too)

JOHN J. MILLER

ABOUT a week before the 2000 election, Al Gore found himself in a minor flap when a group of Arab Americans said that he told them he opposed moving the U.S. embassy in Israel to the capital, Jerusalem. Earlier in the year, Gore had assured Jewish leaders that he thought the embassy should in fact go to Jerusalem, from Tel Aviv. Gore seemed to be playing both sides of the issue, and the Bush campaign accused him of doing just that.

So Gore's team put out a press release clarifying his position. His longstanding view, it said, was that the embassy should move, but only if it were done within the context of peace negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians—a reasonable stance, though different from the one the Arab Americans thought they had heard Gore express. The release quoted James Zogby, head of the Arab American Institute, to back up its claim: "Al Gore has had a very consistent position on this issue. What he said in Dearborn [Mich.] is exactly in line with what he has always said."

What Zogby didn't say is that he thinks moving the embassy is a very bad idea; back then, it would have meant criticizing one of Gore's positions. But he's glad to share his opinion now. "Moving the embassy would be a huge mistake, an absolutely huge mistake," he told me in February. "I'm totally against it."

Zogby is probably the most important Arab-American leader in the country—but he's also running an organization that for all practical purposes is an arm of the Democratic party. Journalists reporting on his activities typically neglect to mention this important fact. In February, when the *Washington Post* described Zogby's recent criticisms of attorney general John Ashcroft—including the suggestion that Bush fire him—it merely cited Zogby's affiliation with his Arab American Institute, which it called "influential." This is accurate, but the *Post* failed to note an even more important fact: Zogby campaigned hard for Gore and has given thousands of dollars to Democrats, all the time using the Arab American Institute as his base of operations.

If a conservative were allowed to pick his neighbors, Jim Zogby, 56, is the sort of guy who would make the short list. He's a smart and pleasant fellow, a good conversationalist who is an active member of his church and community. He may be a Democrat, but he's a pro-life Democrat. "I've gone to my party's convention and worn a pin reading, 'I'm a pro-life Democrat and I want my party back,'" he says. As a college sophomore, Zogby actually ran a Students for Goldwater chapter, but the Vietnam War and the civil-rights movement convinced him to abandon the GOP. He hasn't looked back since.

Many people believe that the typical Arab American is a Muslim immigrant, but this is not true—a solid majority of them are U.S.-born Christians. As ethnic profiles go, they are more like assimilated Italian Americans than like today's big-city taxi drivers. Zogby's Maronite Catholic parents came to the U.S. from Lebanon, and he was born in Utica, N.Y. (His brother, John Zogby, is a well-known and respected pollster.)

While earning a Ph.D. in Islamic studies from Temple University, Zogby spent time at a Palestinian refugee camp conducting interviews. On his flight back to the U.S., he realized he had stumbled upon his life's work. He founded the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, left teaching, and became a professional Arab American.

Advocating on behalf of the Palestinians is a messy business, and over the years Zogby has adopted dozens of controversial positions. In 1982, when he was executive director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination

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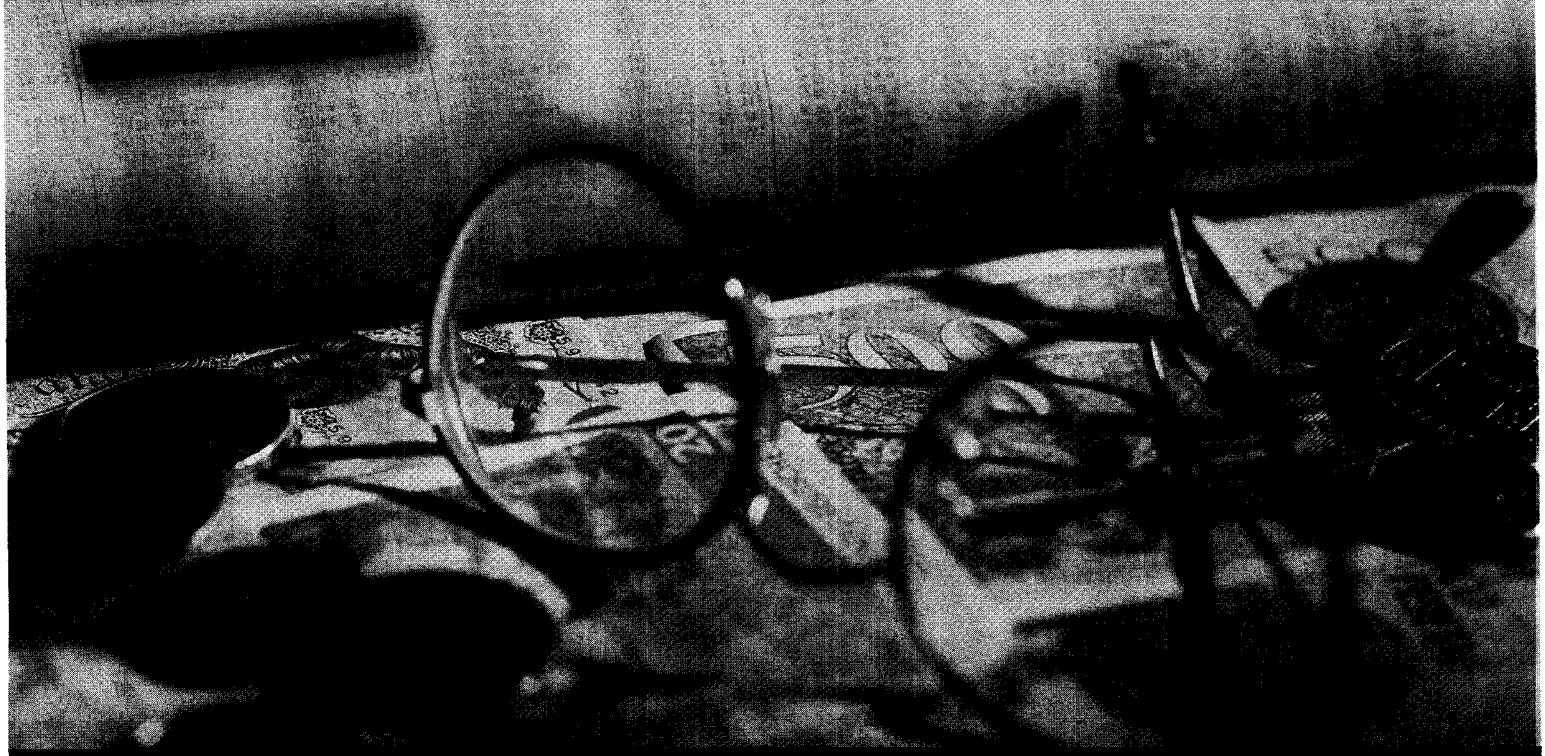

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Committee, another group he helped found, his organization called the Israelis "Nazis" and compared their activities in southern Lebanon to "genocide" and a "Holocaust." Following the model of anti-apartheid activists, Zogby has tried to organize boycotts of companies doing business in Israel. He has also criticized antiterrorism efforts. When the United States arrested a Hamas leader in 1995, Zogby called the move "destructive and not helpful to the peace process," as if letting terrorists run free were somehow in the interests of peace.

A signed picture of Yasser Arafat decorates Zogby's K Street office a few blocks from the White House, and he becomes prickly when discussing the Palestinian leader. "Arafat has made some horrible mistakes, but he cares about his people and he is their leader," says Zogby. "The language people use against him is shameful. Nobody talks about Golda Meir or Menachem Begin the way they talk about Arafat, but these were horrible-looking people. Arafat is the victim of the politics of personal destruction."

In 1997, Zogby accused Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres of "state-sponsored terrorism" for attacking Hezbollah camps. So I asked Zogby: Is Arafat a terrorist? He paused at the question. "The tactics he's used fit the classic definition of terrorism," he said at last, "but I wouldn't want to reduce him to that label. He's more than that. Name-calling isn't helpful to the discussion, it doesn't help the issue move forward, so I don't engage in it."

This isn't quite true. In January, Zogby called Israeli leaders Ariel Sharon and Benjamin Netanyahu "brutal bullies." His weekly columns, carried in newspapers throughout the Middle East, accuse his critics and foes of "anti-Arab propaganda" and even "McCarthyism." More disturbing, however, is the way he characterizes the current wave of violence in Israel and Palestine. Arabs feel "legitimate anger" at the Israelis, he wrote in February. Their terrorism comes from deep despair: "Our young are killing themselves because they see no hope in living. Death has become an attractive alternative to life." Israel's actions are "shameful and wicked" and they are "crushing lives and hope." In December, he wrote of the intifada "having already taken a terrible toll in Palestinian lives"—with hardly a mention of the hundreds of Israelis who also have been killed. (Unlike some Palestinian sympathizers, however, Zogby says he supports the right of Israel to exist.)

Zogby himself is no stranger to violence. In 1980, his office was firebombed, and he's received death threats in the wake of Sept. 11. He is unsparing in his praise of Bush's performance right after the attacks. "The president saved lives by speaking out against anti-Arab and anti-Muslim violence," says Zogby. "There's no question the collective effort of national leadership stopped hate crimes in their tracks, changed the national discourse, and brought out our better angels. I will never forget what he did."

Yet these deeds do not make him a Bush fan. "I have deep differences with him on a range of issues," he says, ticking off tax cuts and school choice as two examples. And truth be told, he really doesn't think Bush made a vital difference for Arab Americans last September: "I think Al Gore would have done just as well."

James Zogby by Roman Genn

Even though Arab Americans were more likely to support Bush than Gore in 2000—45 percent to 38 percent, by Zogby's own reckoning (plus 13 percent for Ralph Nader, an Arab American)—Zogby himself says he wishes Gore were president today. This creates a problem. Zogby intends to speak for Arab America, but he plainly does not reflect its political preferences. It's true that he will occasionally scold a Democrat; Bill Clinton received a sharp word every now and then, and in 1986 Zogby issued a report accusing Senate candidate Tom Daschle of "Arab-baiting" in his fundraising letters. But these are just a handful of exceptions in what is otherwise an iron rule that the interests of Democrats must be advanced. In 1984 and 1988, Zogby was involved in Jesse Jackson's presidential campaigns at a high level, and he worked for Clinton in 1992 and 1996.

"I may be partisan, but the institute is not partisan," he insists. This is a difficult line to walk, and it's not clear that Zogby succeeds at it. His Arab American Leadership PAC, housed in the same office as the AAI, regularly gives more than 70 percent of its funds to Democrats, including left-wingers such as Jesse Jackson Jr. and Barbara Lee. The 2002 election cycle is still young, but so far Zogby has directed 81 percent of his PAC's giving to Democrats. That's downright bipartisan compared to his personal donations—thousands of dollars over the years to the likes of Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders.

Exhibit A in Zogby's defense is board chairman George Salem, a card-carrying member of the GOP. But Salem is a token figure with no real power; the staff's loyalties are to Zogby, and Zogby controls the $1 million budget. (Zogby admits that about 30 percent of his funding comes from foreign sources. "No governments," he says, "only individuals.") "Salem is basically clueless," says a Republican activist.

Someday the GOP might have a rival organization. But in the meantime, James Zogby sits atop Arab American politics—and he's trying to make sure as many Democrats as possible join him there. **NR**

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■ AT WAR ■

'A Very, Very Bad Bunch'

An Iranian group and its surprising American friends

SAM DEALEY

In a Senate speech after the September 11 attacks, New Jersey Democrat Robert Torricelli suggested ways in which Congress might help the federal government fight terrorism. The first change he proposed was to abolish the five-year statute of limitations on prosecution of terrorists. "The nation has no statute of limitations for treason or for murder," he said. "Terrorism is every [bit] as insidious, and the statute of limitations should be lifted."

But even as he spoke, Torricelli continued his active support for the National Council of Resistance of Iran—an organization the State Department classifies as a front group for the People's Mujahedin of Iran, a terrorist group supported by Saddam Hussein. From its inception over 35 years ago, the Mujahedin has consistently engaged in attacks on American interests overseas. It has killed U.S. servicemen and civilians, and bombed U.S. business offices; it participated in the 1979 seizure of the American embassy in Tehran. Despite its inclusion on the State Department's select list of global terrorist organizations for the last six years, a spokeswoman for Torricelli claims the senator still fully supports the group.

Nor is Torricelli alone. Other members of Congress have also been strong advocates of the People's Mujahedin. Indeed, at least two congressmen—James Traficant, an Ohio Democrat, and William "Lacy" Clay, a Missouri Democrat—wrote to Secretary of State Colin Powell on the group's behalf *after* September 11.

Mr. Dealey is a writer in Washington, D.C.

How has a terrorist group managed to win the support of mainstream U.S. politicians? Simple: Its political representatives in the U.S. have worked hard to repackage the group as a legitimate dissident organization fighting for democracy in Iran—whitewashing its record and duping our leaders.

In its early years, the People's Mujahedin was devoted to reading Marx, Ho Chi Minh, and Che Guevara, and adapting their principles to a Shiite society. Trained in terror tactics by the PLO, the group was devoted to the violent overthrow of the shah, whom it perceived as a CIA puppet. But soon after Ayatollah Khomeini deposed the shah, the People's Mujahedin found itself on the outside of Iran's new power structure. The group had always been more Marxist than Muslim, and the clerical forces in the new regime turned against their former comrades.

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People's Mujahedin continues to find naïve supporters in the U.S. Congress.

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In 1981, the Mujahedin's leaders fled to Paris and threw their support behind Iraq's Saddam Hussein in his war against Iran and the ayatollah. In 1986, they moved to Baghdad—where, with Saddam's assistance, they started another military wing known as the National Liberation Army. A 1994 State Department report indicates that the Mujahedin has trained and fought alongside Iraqi troops on a number of occasions, and that "Saddam Hussein has been one of [its] primary financiers, providing weapons and cash totaling an estimated hundreds of millions of dollars."

"They're a very, very bad bunch," says an official with the anti-Saddam Iraqi National Congress. "They take direct orders from Saddam, and they've hoodwinked people on Capitol Hill." A spokesman for Reza Pahlavi, the exiled son of the former shah who advocates Iranian democracy, offers a more diplomatic assessment. "We do consider that the democratic movement in Iran should be all inclusive," he says. "However, we cannot accept those groups that resort to violence and terrorism as a means of bringing democracy to Iran."

Despite its violent history, the People's Mujahedin would like to gain international legitimacy as Iran's "government in exile." Its immediate goal is to get its name off the State Department's list of terrorist organizations; to that end, it now purports to support a host of democratic ideals, from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to freedom of religion and the free market. It has even abandoned its revolutionary flag—composed of a Koran verse, a sickle, and a Kalashnikov assault rifle—for that of the former shah, whom they worked to depose.

But there's little evidence of real change. The group's leaders are the same ones who led it during its anti-shah days, and the U.S. front group's website openly admits its affiliation with the Iraq-based Mujahedin military force.

The Mujahedin's Washington spokesman, Alireza Jafarzadeh, attempts—unconvincingly—to distance the group from its past. He says, for example, that the group assassinated Americans in the 1970s because it had been taken over by radicals; in fact, U.S. intelligence indicates that Massoud Rajavi, the group's leader, was in firm control at the time. Jafarzadeh also claims that the 1979 U.S.-embassy takeover was a Khomeini scheme to test his supporters, and that the Mujahedin had to either "endorse [it] entirely" or take a vague and "very calculated" decision to sign on; Jafarzadeh claims the group took the latter.

But in fact, on the day of the takeover, the Mujahedin issued a statement: "After the shah, it's America's turn." And when the hostages were released, the group boasted that it was "the first force who rose unequivocally to the support of the occupation of the American spy center."

Still, the group continues to find naïve supporters like Congressman Edolphus Towns, Democrat of New York. He says, "I think they could replace [Iran's mullahs], I really do." Experts on Iran scoff at this claim.

Congressman Gary Ackerman, also a New York Democrat, acknowledges that

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the Mujahedin's ties with Iraq are "disturbing," but he brushes them off as an acceptable tradeoff: "I think it would help if people understand that when you're trying to get rid of a terrorist regime, you use who you can." According to *Iran Brief*, an independent watchdog publication, Ackerman received more than $32,000 from People's Mujahedin sympathizers in his 1998 race.

But the Mujahedin's strongest congressional ally is Torricelli, a senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; *Iran Brief* says he has received more than $140,000 in Mujahedin-related contributions. Over the past decade, Torricelli has written a slew of letters to administration officials and participated in several of the U.S. front group's events. In his most recent letter, dated August 27, 2001, he urged the State Department not to redesignate the People's Mujahedin as a terrorist group. On October 5, the group was again listed among State's 28 targeted organizations. "Our position remains the same," a Torricelli spokeswoman says, "and that is that the [group] is a political organization advocating democracy in Iran."

The spokeswoman claims that "more than 200" members of Congress support the Mujahedin; but this is seriously misleading. While a lengthy "Dear Colleague" letter decrying the Iranian regime—distributed in October 2000 by Ackerman and Florida Republican Ileana Ros-Lehtinen—did garner 228 signatures, mention of this group was buried at the bottom of the back of the page. Had it been more prominent in the letter, support could well have been considerably lower. Indiana Republican Dan Burton signed the letter, but his spokesman now says that the Mujahedin "are not exactly the kind of people we want to associate with. Most members will sign on to the generic anti-Iran stuff, but they stay away from these guys." Burton supported the Mujahedin until 1995, when evidence presented by the State Department convinced him to withdraw his backing.

Burton has it right: There are growing signs that young Iranians are displeased with their regime, and they certainly deserve our support. But anti-American terrorists, just as clearly, do not. **NR**

■ **EUROPE** ■

That Continental Army

The EU is spoiling for a fight—or at least a military

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

London

It was a classic old-fashioned scoop. The March 3 *Sunday Telegraph* carried the texts of two official letters to Sir David Manning, foreign-affairs adviser to prime minister Tony Blair. The first letter, dated January 17 and sent from the office of foreign secretary Jack Straw, urged that British troops join the European Union's fledgling Rapid Reaction Force (ERRF) in what was intended to be its first mission—replacing the present NATO mission in Macedonia. The second letter, dated five days later and signed by an adviser to defense secretary Geoff Hoon, strongly opposed both the mission itself and any British participation in it.

If the revelation of this official disagreement was embarrassing, the reasons given by both ministers were still more so. The Foreign Office line was almost deliciously serpentine. There was "growing pressure," it reported, for the EU to take over the NATO mission this spring; this was a mistake and should be opposed "at least for now"; but if Britain looked like it were "becoming isolated," then "we would do better to accept an EU mission and seek to shape it to our specifications"; and such a course would naturally require Britain's "contributing some forces to take part in this, first, ESDP [European Security and Defense Policy] mission."

No satirist could have improved on this as a description of the bankruptcy of British policy on the EU. Since the Foreign Office invariably argues that Britain must avoid being "isolated" in EU affairs, and since Britain is invariably isolated on important matters, the FO always ends up advising that Britain should mount a brief show of resistance and then give way. This generally happens.

At first glance, the Defense Ministry's arguments were more realistic. It warned that the situation in Macedonia was likely to deteriorate; that the British troops would thereby be put at risk; that Britain's armed forces were already "overstretched"; and that the proposed intervention might well destabilize the entire Macedonian region.

But these objections did not in themselves amount to a reason that Britain should oppose the mission. No, Hoon's grounds for opposition were much more in accord with New Labour's obsession with "spin" and opinion management—and just as concerned as the FO with the objective of selling European defense integration to nervous British voters. So the official memo reached the conclusion that if the ERRF got into real trouble in Macedonia, "there would be a real risk that the EU's first mission would end in failure or rescue by a re-engaged NATO, which would be disastrous in presentational terms." One senses that, of the two possibilities, an outright defeat might be preferable to Europe's being rescued by NATO yet again.

What is especially embarrassing to the Blair government about this leak is that both letters reveal the nakedly political—and militarily pointless—nature of the ERRF. Putting troops in harm's way in order to demonstrate your political commitment to a mission you privately think is mistaken is almost a definition of recklessness. Yet elevating political above military considerations in this way is how the ERRF works.

It began its current life as a way for Tony Blair to demonstrate his credentials as a "good European" despite Britain's holding aloof from the euro. Britain pledged 12,500 ground troops, 18 warships, and 72 combat aircraft to the proposed 60,000-strong Euro-army. The idea met with immediate criticism: What was the European army for? In what kind of crises would it intervene? And where? Where would it get its military resources? From NATO, thus diverting scarce resources from a functioning military alliance? Or from other expenditures, thus duplicating NATO resources? And so on.

The underlying problem is that while the ERRF needs substantial military

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investment to be a credible force, the European nations want to maintain low defense expenditures. Their armed forces are therefore heavily reliant on the U.S. for such tasks as airlifting troops or electronic spying. Senior soldiers, along with the more rational European defense ministers, recognize these realities and seek to cut back on potential commitments. But the politicians want the glory of creating a specifically European defense institution—even if it can't defend anything.

That, however, is reason to be wary of it rather than dismissive. Why, after all, are senior political figures prepared to put European soldiers at risk for no good reason? The answer is that the ERRF is the vehicle for a strong political passion: Euro-nationalism, the desire to build a European superpower that would rival the U.S. It would be foolish to dismiss such a prospect simply because European nations are currently unwilling to increase defense spending. They might make different choices in a united Europe—either from a direct desire to challenge America or, over the longer term, because a growing Atlantic rift forces them to build an independent military capability to protect their economic interests in the Persian Gulf or the Caspian Sea. Europe is sufficiently rich and technically advanced to be able to build up such a capability in a relatively short time; and any such Euro-force would very likely be under the control of those Europeans who are institutionally prejudiced against American power. Imagine Chris Patten with his own nuclear-armed intervention force.

For this very reason, Atlanticists in Europe have been generally skeptical of institutions like the ERRF. But President Bush cut the ground from under such opposition shortly after entering office by endorsing the ERRF—admittedly with the little-noticed and unenforceable qualification that it should help NATO, not harm it. It is not possible for European politicians to be more pro-American than the occupant of the Oval Office.

Which brings us back to Tony Blair. It was Blair, presenting himself as America's best friend in Europe, who persuaded Bush to go along with the ERRF in order to get along better with the EU. It is undeniable that Blair has kept his side of the larger bargain: He has backed the U.S. in every major foreign-policy decision since Bush's inauguration, let alone since Sept. 11. His latest move has been to give advance backing to a potential U.S. attack on Iraq, even though his EU partners and the great majority of Labour MPs oppose any such intervention. And he deserves American gratitude for that.

But gratitude should not blind the U.S. to its own long-term interests. Further integration into a common European foreign policy and defense force would remove Britain's independent ability to support the U.S. in Iraq or anywhere else. Such questions would be decided by a Euro-committee chaired, no doubt, by Chris Patten or Joschka Fischer or Hubert Vedrine. To be sure, as ERRF backers often point out, Britain could always urge united European support for the U.S. in such cases.

I can read the Foreign Office memo now: "We should support EU intervention alongside the U.S., at least for now. But if Britain looks like it's becoming isolated, we would do better to join our European partners in an EU non-intervention force—the first such non-intervention force in human history." **NR**

■ **THE WORLD** ■

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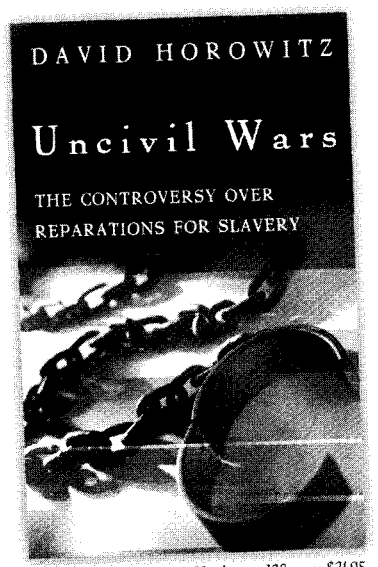
LEE A. CASEY &

DAVID B. RIVKIN JR.

BILL CLINTON admitted that it had "significant flaws," and knew that the Senate would never approve it. But in the final weeks of his presidency, he went ahead and signed the 1998 Rome Treaty anyway—and now it's up to

Messrs. Casey and Rivkin are partners in the Washington, D.C., office of Baker & Hostetler LLP. Both served in the Reagan and George H. W. Bush administrations.

A Bad Idea Whose Time Has Come



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President Bush to correct his mistake.

The Rome Treaty seeks to create a permanent International Criminal Court, or ICC. Participation in this new regime would be inconsistent with our national interests, with the Constitution, and with democratic principles. The president should withdraw the Clinton signature and make clear that the United States will neither support the ICC nor permit that court to mistreat our citizens or compromise our interests overseas. A debate is underway inside the administration regarding whether, how, and when to do so; there are abundant policy and legal justifications for taking this action immediately.

The new ICC would be a first: For the first time in history, an independent international institution would be capable of punishing individual Americans for actions it considers to be violations of international law. It would be unlike the United Nations, in that the U.S. would not have veto power over its actions. Its prosecutors and judges would have the legal right to demand the extradition of any American citizen—from the president himself down to John Q. Public—they believe may have violated the laws of war, or committed any of the other offenses identified in the court's statute. These include "crimes against humanity," "genocide," and "aggression"—horrific offenses, to be sure, but defined broadly enough in the ICC treaty to include such ambiguous items as "outrages against personal dignity" and "serious injury to mental health." How these terms are interpreted and applied will be entirely within the discretion of the ICC, whose personnel are unlikely to be sympathetic to the U.S.

Although a number of our allies have signed the treaty, the ICC also has been embraced by states such as Algeria, Cambodia, Haiti, Iran, Nigeria, Sudan, and Syria—all of which have been implicated in the use of torture, extrajudicial killings, or both. Yet once their instruments of ratification are presented, each would have a full and equal voice in selecting the ICC's judges and prosecutors. Moreover, leaving aside the "outlaw" states, if the U.S. were itself to ratify the Rome Treaty, it would have precisely as much say—one vote—in how the court is run as, for example, the tiny states of Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, San Marino, and Nauru (a Pacific atoll). Such arrangements were unacceptable to the U.S. when it joined the United Nations (where it obtained veto power in the Security Council), and they remain equally unacceptable today.

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The ICC is an undemocratic institution of which the U.S. should have no part.

■

There is little doubt that the European states that have joined the ICC treaty regime—at least those that maintain more than a police force for national-defense purposes—assume that they will be in charge at the court. Indeed, since 1997, London, Paris, and Berlin have offered the sweetest of assurances that the U.S., its elected officials, and its armed forces would never be the targets of this institution. Rather, they claim that the ICC would only pursue the worst offenses by the very worst of people: Saddam Hussein is frequently mentioned.

But this is wishful thinking. In fact, the myth of a court for despots was exploded in 1999, when the Canadian prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia—the ICC's recognized model—investigated the U.S. and its NATO allies for alleged war crimes during their air campaign against Serbia. No indictments were brought, but this was only because the prosecutor concluded that she would not be able to obtain enough evidence to convict sufficiently high-level officials, such as the president of the United States and the prime minister of Great Britain.

Since then, the fallback position of ICC supporters has been that the principle of "complementarity" will protect the U.S. and its citizens from politically motivated ICC prosecutions. Complementarity, which is indeed written into the Rome Treaty, suggests that national authorities have the primary right to prosecute their own nationals for offenses within the ICC's jurisdiction, and that only if a state is "unwilling or unable genuinely to carry out the investigation or prosecution" would the ICC itself act. But this guarantee is just as illusory as faith in the prosecutors' goodwill. *Application* of the complementarity principle is entirely within the unreviewable discretion of the ICC itself, which alone would decide when a national prosecution, or lack thereof, was "adequate."

In any case, the flaws of the ICC run much deeper than the issues of its practical application. Joining this treaty regime would be inconsistent with the most fundamental principle of American republicanism—that those who exercise government authority, such as the right to prosecute and judge criminal offenses, must be elected by the American people, or, at a minimum, be appointed by their elected representatives and be accountable for their actions. The new court's officials would not be elected by the American people (or any people, for that matter) and would not be accountable to them. This is an undemocratic institution of which the U.S. should have no part.

Furthermore, U.S. ratification would be unconstitutional. The ICC would be able to investigate and prosecute alleged offenses taking place entirely within the U.S. Under the Constitution and the Supreme Court's relevant precedents, offenses committed by Americans within the U.S. must be tried in U.S. courts, with the full application of the Bill of Rights. Any such crime must be publicly tried by a jury in the place where the crime was committed, and the accused must be afforded the opportunity to confront all of the prosecution's witnesses. The ICC would not provide these rights, nor would it provide protection against "double jeopardy," as required by the Constitution.

Here's what it *would* permit: secret hearings, secret witnesses, conviction based on a simple majority vote of a judicial panel, and the opportunity for the prosecution to appeal any acquittal. All of these elements are, of course, entirely unacceptable under the Constitution and laws of the U.S. when applied to civilian defendants. Such extraordinary measures have been

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approved by the Supreme Court only for the narrow category of persons defined as "unlawful combatants." Individuals such as Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda terrorists, who do not wear uniforms, do not carry arms openly, and do not fight in accordance with the laws of war, are subject to trial by "military commission" under the Supreme Court's ruling in *Ex parte Quirin* (1942). That case involved the trial of eight Nazi saboteurs, and reflects the only constitutionally permissible exception to the general rule; it provides the legal rationale for President Bush's order creating military commissions to try bin Laden and his accomplices. Adherence to the ICC treaty would transform this narrow exception, permitting reduced procedural rights for unlawful combatants during time of war, into a general rule, applicable at all times, without distinction among civilians, lawful combatants, and unlawful combatants. Such an arrogation of power has been specifically forbidden by the Supreme Court, in its landmark decision in *Ex parte Milligan* (1866), which held that a civilian could not be subjected to military justice.

For all of these reasons, President Bush should withdraw the American signature from the Rome Treaty, and make clear that the U.S. will not participate in the ICC regime. Both houses of Congress have already passed a bill called the American Service Members Protection Act, which would forbid U.S. cooperation with the ICC. The bill would also implement a number of protections necessary to ensure that the ICC does not, even though the U.S. has not ratified the Rome Treaty, attempt to exercise its jurisdiction over American troops overseas. When U.S. forces engage in U.N.-sponsored operations, our soldiers should not be accountable to ICC "justice."

All in all, the Rome Treaty offers the American people a remarkably bad deal, and President Clinton should never have signed it. But President Bush can undo the damage. The president should reassert America's rights and interests, and make clear that the United States will neither be bound to the ICC regime nor be intimidated by it. **NR**

■ **CULTURE WATCH** ■

Forms! Forms! Forms!

A bureaucracy's answer to trouble—or to anything

THEODORE DALRYMPLE

THE shockwaves of September 11 have finally reached the British prison in which I have worked as a doctor for the last twelve years. The authorities have woken from their habitual slumbers and asked me for proof of my identity, to demonstrate that I am who I say I am. Had it not been for the attack on the World Trade Center, I doubt that I should ever have been asked.

For the purposes of the official identification process, a passport is equal to one electricity bill and a bank statement. A birth certificate would also be good, though of course there is no reason why the name on any of these documents should correspond to the true identity of an evilly-disposed person. It doesn't matter, though, because the whole business isn't really about security at all, except in the sense of security of employment: It is about covering a well-known—indeed, the best-known—part of the bureaucratic anatomy.

While they were at it, the authorities took the opportunity to check that I was medically qualified. My ministrations over the years do not appear to have satisfied them beyond reasonable doubt on this score; nor does the fact that I hold a position in the neighboring hospital.

Of course, I find this mildly insulting and irritating. But I can see the point: Bogus doctors have in fact succeeded in practicing for many years without detection or exposure. Alas, in their attempts to establish that I am not an impostor, the authorities, while asking for several documents, omitted to ask for those very ones that would prove I possessed the qualifications I claimed for myself. Thus, with an aim that is infallible, do British bureaucrats miss their target, however easily hit it might be.

And then, inevitably, there was the security form. The authorities, it seems, have been alerted to the fact that Islamic fundamentalism is fast making converts in British jails, especially among black street criminals: The would-be shoe-bomber of the flight from Paris to Miami was an alumnus of a British jail. The spread of fundamentalist Islam among such a population is clearly alarming. Obviously, some official response is required.

So I was asked to tick a series of yes/no boxes: Have I ever been involved in terrorism? Have I ever been involved in sabotage? Have I ever been involved in actions intended to overthrow or undermine parliamentary democracy by political, industrial, or violent means?

On reading these questions, I was prey to a fantasy of almost hallucinatory intensity. I saw Osama bin Laden's lanky form handing out questionnaires to his followers on an Afghan mountainside, asking them such yes/no questions as, "Have you ever been employed by the CIA or MI6? Have you ever voted in a democratic election? Have you ever been a member of any movement that promoted liberal democracy or equality for women?"

Naturally, bin Laden's security form would carry a rather sterner warning about the consequences of not answering these questions truthfully than its British equivalent: death by stoning as against dismissal from the service. But in all other respects, it would be a mirror image of it.

Lest Americans imagine that this kind of idiocy is confined to the British, I should perhaps point out that visitors to the United States are asked to declare on their arrival form, by the simple expedient of ticking a box, that they have not engaged in genocide. In the corridors of power, presumably, genocidal maniacs are conceived in the

Dr. Dalrymple works in a prison and a hospital situated in a British slum. He is a contributing editor of *City Journal*, and his most recent book is *Life at the Bottom: The Worldview That Makes the Underclass*.

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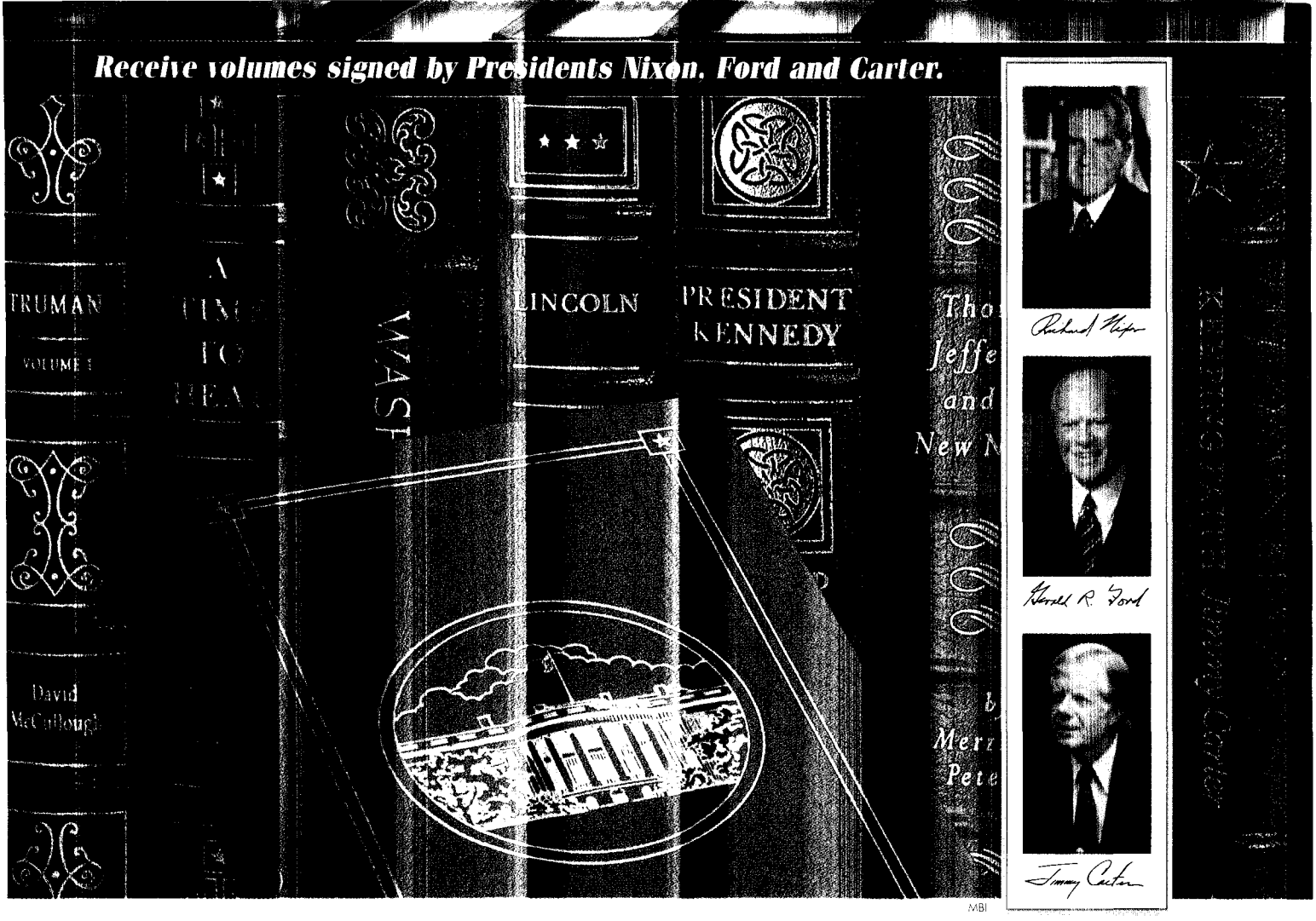

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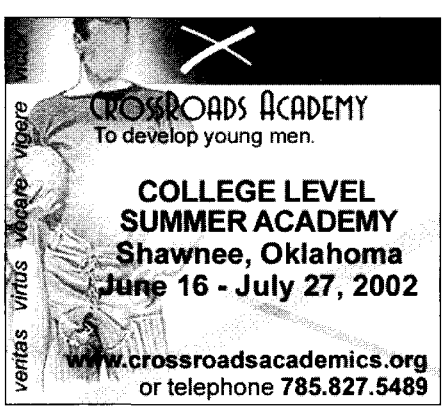
matter of truth to be like George Washington: They cannot tell a lie. There, they draw the line.

It was once explained to me that this box-ticking procedure was carried out so that, in the event that the person filling in such a form had told a lie, immediate and summary action could be taken against him. But this surely cannot be the case: Even a bureaucrat can't truly believe that telling a lie about having participated in genocide is worse than actually having participated in it.

It would be interesting to know how many people are refused entry to the United States annually because they owned up to genocide.

No, the fact is that bureaucrats are inclined to believe that to every problem there is an equal and opposite form, whose completion by enough people will solve it: or if not solve it, at least prove that they, the bureaucrats, have done everything in their power about the problem, and are therefore doing their jobs properly.

I can well imagine the civil servants in Britain busily engaged for several months on devising the security form I have just described, having pre-breakfast committee meetings about it, thrashing out its finer points, arguing over the wording, imagining that they are laboring very hard in the interests of the nation's security. Even the color of the paper on which the form was to be printed had to be decided upon: in this case, something between salmon-pink and apricot, a warm Mediterranean color to lull the unwary terrorist or saboteur into thinking that his bureaucratic enemy is friendly and well disposed towards him. Immersion in such detail allows people to lose sight of the absurdity of the whole enterprise.



In today's Britain there is an official form for every occasion. I now hesitate to draw the attention of administrators to any problem in the institutions in which I work in case they introduce another paper procedure to overcome it. Such a procedure is in their view the answer to all questions. If anything goes wrong once a procedure has been instituted, then finding out who is to blame is a simple matter: It is a question of finding out who failed to carry out his part of the procedure properly. And if the procedure was carried out properly from first to last (which is very rarely the case, since procedures are made deliberately complex to render their fulfillment in every particular almost impossible), then no one was to blame. It was just one of those things.

The British prison department, for example, turned its mind to the question of suicide in prison. A lot of adverse publicity had been given to the fact that there was more hanging in our prisons since the abolition of the death penalty than there ever had been before: Suicide now claimed more victims than execution.

The department's answer to the problem was a form of stunning complexity, to be filled in by wardens whenever any prisoner claimed or was noticed to be suicidal. The numbers of prisoners claiming to be suicidal promptly shot up, and the suicide rate doubled. This is perhaps because in order to obtain the privileges granted to the supposedly suicidal, prisoners feel obliged to make gestures, some of which go wrong. But whenever a suicide takes place, the official inquiry into it consists almost exclusively of an examination of whether procedure was followed and the form filled in correctly. If it was, everyone is exonerated.

Thus it is that an atmosphere of overwork and pointless tasks to be fulfilled is created, without any sensible achievement to show for it, quite the contrary. Men labor mightily to produce nothing, indeed to prevent others from producing anything. And the surreal idiocy of unavoidable paperwork creates cynicism and a lack of respect for truth in society as a whole. That is why the extension of government bureaucracy into every corner of life is not only inefficient, but destructive of the human personality. **NR**

■ **CULTURE WATCH II** ■

Uncle Sam Wants Them

The young who fight, and the older who watch them

ROB LONG

A FEW years ago, Jerry Lewis—who, in his old age, is sort of the Fritz Hollings of show-business figures—was at a meeting with studio executives. There was some talk, apparently, of his directing a new picture. The meeting had been going smoothly until one of the younger executives—a guy who was maybe 30, 31—began to share his thoughts on casting, script changes, possible locations, things like that. He clicked through his considerable list of notes, winding up with a deferential smile and a "What do you think, Jerry?"

Jerry gave him a silent, stone-faced stare. An ugly silence filled the conference room. Then Jerry turned, slowly, to the person on his right and pointed to the young executive without looking at him. "He's *twelve*," Jerry said, with baffled rage.

And that, according to my sources, was that. Meeting over.

It's all very funny, of course, until you discover, as I did last week, buried in some article, that the average age of the men and women aboard the USS *John C. Stennis*—a massive, state-of-the-art aircraft carrier currently protecting our freedoms somewhere in the Arabian Sea—is 21.

Twenty-one. Let me, as the kids say, break it down for you. Most of them were born around 1981. They dimly remember the Gulf War. They cast their first presidential ballot *in 2000*. Who among us has not, after one of these brave young people has been interviewed by, say, the comparatively ancient Ashleigh Banfield, and after he has breezily pointed out the complicated avionics aboard his million-dollar helicopter, pointed to the television and said, "He's *twelve*."

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We all maintain a personal "Timetables of History" poster in our heads: "I was six when Nixon resigned; I was 12 when Reagan was inaugurated and the hostages came home; I was 21 when the Gulf War started." But gradually these milestones cease to be something that happened to *me* and become something that happened *in history*. Time turns us all into Jerry Lewis. It's not enough that we realize how old we are; we must also realize how young everyone else is.

A 51-year-old American—born in 1952—was barely old enough in 1970 to serve in the Vietnam War. And for people roughly my age—I'm 36—war is something waged by an all-volunteer military for specific ends, not some larger cultural movement of which to be a part. Whether you were Rosie the Riveter back home during the Big One or some bearded, hyper-tense Trotskyite at Berkeley during the Complicated One, you were still part of a large American moment. Sitting at home, watching MSNBC and wondering if Ashleigh Banfield is going to wear that sleeveless number again, is not the same thing.

Those who argue, as I do, that the current War on Terrorism should be expanded to include Iraq (and why stop there?) are in a bind. We didn't, most of us, serve. We didn't, most of us, even seriously consider it. The closest I came to military service—besides my years as a Boy Scout—was heading to the post office in 1983 to fill out my Selective Service card. It never occurred to me to forgo my years as an indolent, feckless Ivy League liberal for 100 push-ups and getting yelled at by a mean man who didn't respect my personhood.

The twenty-somethings now heavy-lifting the War on Terrorism chose the military from among (presumably) a set of choices. Walk into any Subway sandwich shop and try to order a turkey sub from the 21-year-old mouth-breathing, slack-jawed kid, and you'll be hard put to visualize him in a sailor's cap, guiding screaming jets onto the deck of the USS *John C. Stennis*, but try it anyway—it'll make you feel better. You can take the sting out of your own personal Jerry Lewis moment by imagining the black-clad, lip-pierced, tongue-studded, sullen-eyed girl who keeps slamming your loaf of bread onto the infra-red reader at the supermarket because she can't be bothered to key in the price suddenly transformed, dressed in battleship-blue cottons, piercings closed up and studs de-studded, swabbing the C deck at 0600.

The kids at the local record store in the non sequitur T-shirts and stoner attitudes aren't all that different from the kids on the *Stennis*. The great, wide intake valve of the U.S. military-recruitment effort could just as easily have sucked them up, and the moron at Subway, and the young Cruella de Vil at the supermarket, and transformed them, nine months later, into useful citizens of the *Stennis*.

It is somewhat common for those against the expansion of the War on Terrorism to note that those who are for it are usually too old to serve themselves, or too clever to have served when they had the chance. Like all below-the-belt arguments, this one is entirely valid. There is, in fact, something a little too facile about the argument that these young people all chose—clear-eyed and sober—to submit themselves to the dangers of war. There is, especially among doughy thirty-somethings like me, a little too much fatuous confidence in the all-volunteer professional armed forces.

War is something best suited to the very young, after all. Only they have that special combination of bravery, foolhardiness, passion, and physical energy to do the job well. Only they have the unblemished confidence in the tools that God gave them—strength, reflexes, good eyesight—and the tools provided by the American taxpayer—Harrier jets, cruise missiles, satellite telemetry—to fight without fear, and win without remorse.

Those of us on the Jerry Lewis side of the Timetables of History—peaceniks and hawks alike—tend to misunderstand these kids. The left wing's contempt for the soldier is a relic of the Vietnam era, but so is the right wing's World War Two image of the Regular Joe army. These days, Regular Joe is at Regular Joe State University, studying date-rape awareness and the history of diversity.

In the service of our country and our beliefs, one thing is certain: We need young people to fight, which means we need young people to die. The peacenik's cry that those who have not fought should not send others to fight is a bizarre demographic non-starter: that would leave old men and youngish southern men in charge, which isn't quite the ruling class that people like William Sloane Coffin have in mind. Likewise, the young hawk's sanguine assessment that military service is a choice—a choice that has consequences—suggests a kind of professionalized, outsourced military, a supply-side service.

What we must remember is that these are young people who, in different circumstances, might be listening to irritating music and getting our orders wrong and driving too fast down our streets. They are letting us use their bravery and strength for a little while because they are young and think they're immortal, because they love their country or didn't want to go to college, because they always wanted to fly a plane, or because they needed the money. Or, maybe, a combination of all of those that only makes sense to a 19-year-old. There are several ways to turn to the person next to you and say, "He's *twelve*." One way is with baffled rage. Another is with awe. A third is with gratitude. **NR**

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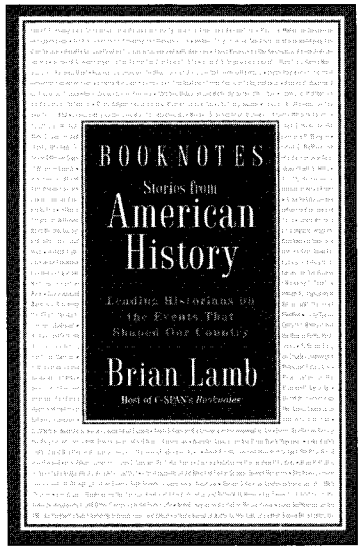

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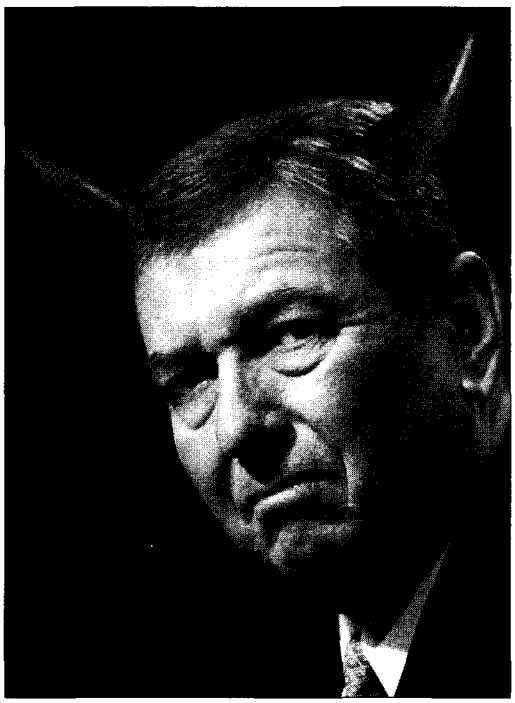
Ashcroft with Horns

This is dedicated to the one they hate

JAY NORDLINGER

AFTER Sept. 11, everything changed, they say—and many things did. The dominant press took a new look at the administration. President Bush—formerly a clueless frat boy—was okay. Donald Rumsfeld—once a Ford-era caveman—was okay too. And Colin Powell, who'd never been not-okay, was even more okay than ever.

But John Ashcroft, the attorney general? Definitely not okay—in fact, something of a terror. Ashcroft bore the brunt of the liberals' fury, or confusion. Even some of the liberals themselves will admit that 9/11 was a disorienting event for them. Everything had been upset. "National security" was no longer a Republican buzz phrase, meant to bloat the defense budget. "The American way of life" was no longer a piece of cheap oratory, fed to simpletons. And the notion of "good and evil" was suddenly plausible.



It could be that the Left needed something to hold on to: something familiar and comforting; something "9/10." And that something was, to a degree, John Ashcroft as devil figure: Ashcroft as threat to the Constitution, as enemy of civil liberties, as representative of dark, religious impulses in the land—impulses liable to run wild under a genuine foreign attack. It was almost as if, after the planes got through destroying all those people, many said, "The terrorists must be stopped, I grant you. But John Ashcroft must be stopped too!" It would be Scoundrel Time all over again, this time led by a Christian conservative from Missouri.

Indeed, "McCarthy" and "Hoover" (as in J. Edgar) were heard frequently in reference to Ashcroft. The least that critics call him is "extremist." It's also widely alleged that Ashcroft is "scary"—"the scariest man in government," wrote the *Washington Post*'s Richard Cohen. Al Hunt, in the *Wall Street Journal*, said, "Sept. 11 has enabled John Ashcroft to be John Ashcroft. That's a scary spectacle."

It was Anthony Lewis of the *New York Times* who best summed up the deepest liberal opinion about Ashcroft. The columnist was retiring after 50 years with the *Times*, and the paper did a farewell interview with him, at the end of last year. What had he learned? First, said Lewis, "certainty is the enemy of decency and humanity in people who are sure they are right, like Osama bin Laden and John Ashcroft." It has come to that: There are circles in which easy comparisons can be made between bin Laden and Ashcroft, with no raised eyebrows.

John Ashcroft will never be a liberal darling, that's for sure. He is liked—even loved—by his own, but he doesn't go out of his way to make himself respectable to elite opinion. He has not "grown" in office—which is to say (sarcastically) that he hasn't moderated his positions. As a conservative Christian, he is easy to mock as an anti-dancing Elmer Gantry. Liberals go after Ashcroft in the same way they went after Kenneth Starr. Back in Lewinsky times, James Carville sneered, "[Starr] goes down by the Potomac and listens to hymns, as the cleansing water of the Potomac goes by . . ." Ashcroft's even worse: He sings hymns in public (about which, more later).

The attorney general has managed to enter the culture. Consider just a couple of offbeat items: *The New York Times Magazine* ran a spread on an eclectic gallery in L.A. It included a photo of an African coffin on which Ashcroft's face has been painted. The gallery owner explained to me that Ashcroft was to be the death of affirmative action, *Roe* vs. *Wade*, and so on. Item No. 2? At a major Washington, D.C., synagogue, Ashcroft figured in a "Purim spiel": He was equated with Haman, a figure of extreme danger—of mass murder—to Jews. Traditionally, Hitler, say, would be equated with Haman.

One veteran Washington reporter—not particularly partisan—shakes his head: "The depth of the hatred that certain liberals have for Ashcroft is hard to fathom. It doesn't seem logical, even given all of Ashcroft's conservative views. It's like a prejudice, it's visceral. There's some

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Ashcroft mooma-jooma—some mo-jo, some karma, some vibe—that drives liberals nuts. It makes otherwise sane people say crazy things."

It seems clear that Ashcroft serves, in part, as a proxy for Bush: that is, liberals and Democrats generally have had to lay off Bush, owing to his popularity and his standing as commander in chief. But they need *someone* on whom to vent their frustration: and that's Ashcroft. He may not like it, but he does Bush the favor of being the administration's lightning rod, its big fat target.

IN THE ARENA

For someone who's supposed to be scary and extreme, John Ashcroft has done awfully well with the public. In Missouri—one of America's great swing states—he was elected attorney general twice, governor twice, and U.S. senator once. When he was state AG, he was chosen by his peers to be chairman of the National Association of Attorneys General. When he was governor, he was again chosen by his peers, to be chairman of the National Governors Association. As one Ashcroft-watcher maintains, "That's a remarkable fact. These groups contain some of the most ambitious, most cut-throat people in the country. They're pits of vipers. And for those people—both Republicans and Democrats—to settle on Ashcroft as their leader is extraordinary."

In 2000, Ashcroft lost his Senate reelection campaign by a whisker—and in most unusual circumstances (a dead opponent; a looming widow; courtroom and polling-place shenanigans). George W. Bush, and others, were impressed by how graciously Ashcroft handled everything—and the president-elect tabbed him to be attorney general.

His confirmation hearings were a nasty affair, chaired by Sen. Patrick Leahy at his nastiest. Good ol' John—whom all the senators had known and, from all outward appearances, liked—was suddenly a racist, a segregationist, and a menace. Even Ashcroft's handlers (no babes in the wood) were shocked by the ferocity of the assault. Sen. Barbara Boxer said the Ashcroft nomination was "driving a stake into the heart of large numbers of Americans." Ted Kennedy screamed that it was *treason* to suggest, as Ashcroft had, that the Bill of Rights was meant, in part, as a check against tyranny. Rep. Maxine Waters said: "I know a racist when I see one. Sen. Ashcroft acts like a racist, walks like a racist, talks like a racist."

The left-leaning press was no better. The mildest thing they said was that Ashcroft was a bone to the far Right—and not just any bone, Hendrik Hertzberg of *The New Yorker* would later write, but "the femur of a tyrannosaur" (get it?). An op-ed piece in *USA Today*—penned by the paper's former Supreme Court reporter—openly asked, "Can a deeply religious person be attorney general?"

Ashcroft was eventually confirmed by his ex-colleagues, 58–42. Permanent Washington—society Washington—was not amused. One mark against Ashcroft, it seemed, was that he lacked charm—that he wasn't at all right for cocktails. *Newsweek*'s Jonathan Alter has written that Ashcroft has "the charm of a walnut." Al Hunt, speaking on television, said that Gov. Frank Keating—whom Bush had considered for AG—at least "would have brought charm." It's hard to argue with Alex S. Jones, a former *New York Times*man, now at Harvard, who told the *Buffalo News*, "John Ashcroft will never be described as a sex toy."

Once ensconced at the Justice Department, Ashcroft made few waves, except to continue his Senate practice of holding a prayer meeting (voluntary and ecumenical) every morning. This was made out to be both kooky and un-American.

■

He may not like it, but Ashcroft does Bush the favor of being the administration's lightning rod, its big fat target.

■

But then came the awful day in September: and Ashcroft was left with an enormous responsibility, especially considering that federal law enforcement was judged to have fallen down badly on the job. His policies—or rather, the administration's—quickly came under attack. Hundreds of foreigners who had violated U.S. law were detained, so that agencies could determine whether they had connections to terrorism. Of these detainees, Richard Cohen wrote, "They exist in an American gulag—a term I use with purposeful exaggeration." (Yes, but tell it to a Russian, or a Chinese, or a Cuban.) Garry Trudeau used his *Doonesbury* to compare American policy to Saddam Hussein's Iraq. The theme of an episode of *The Practice*, a show on ABC, was (as a character put it), "We're back to interning people. Sticking them in prison because of where they were born." The *New York Times* was moved to say—in an editorial titled "Disappearing in America"—"We trust the Bush administration is not seriously considering torture."

These reactions were unhinged from reality.

Then there was "eavesdropping": the government's listening in on conversations between inmates and their attorneys. According to Justice, this has been done with 16 foreigners being held under "special administration measures"—that is, they're suspected of conducting criminal activity from their jail cells. It's not "eavesdropping" either, insists Justice, because both parties—inmates and attorneys—are told what is happening. Furthermore, any evidence gathered may not be shared with prosecutors, except by consent of a federal judge. Reasonable analysts, in possession of the facts, tend to find all of this reasonable. Yet a coalition led by the ACLU condemned "an unprecedented frontal assault on the attorney-client privilege and the right to counsel guaranteed by the Constitution."

Then there were the military tribunals—an instrument of American wartime justice for many generations. President Bush, wanting to be more scrupulous than his predecessors, ordered the Defense Department to devise clear procedures for such tribunals: and Ashcroft got smacked for installing "kangaroo courts."

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There was also a furor concerning guns: Many liberals, both in Congress and in the press, charged that Ashcroft had prevented the FBI from searching a database of gun records. His tender concern for the Second Amendment, they said, trumped any proper concern for anti-terrorism or the well-being of the country. But this was nonsense: When the FBI moved to undertake such a search, FBI lawyers said: No—the law doesn't permit it. Ashcroft concurred. Under fire in Congress, he said that he was simply enforcing the law; if legislators wanted to change their law (enacted in 1998), they were free to do so.

In early December, Ashcroft—fed up with false allegations, and evidently sick of being portrayed as Torquemada—came out blazing before the Senate Judiciary Committee. He called for "an honest, reasoned debate, and not fear-mongering," and went on to say, "To those who scare peace-loving people with phantoms of lost liberty, my message is this: Your tactics only aid terrorists, for they erode our national unity and diminish our resolve."

■

Generations from now, if we're reading about John Ashcroft, we will read that he was the boob who draped the Boob. The story is ineffaceable.

■

That did it: All hell—or much hell—broke loose. Lots of people cried "McCarthyism!" and worse, if there is worse. Ashcroft was talking about . . . well, brazen and groundless fear-mongering, as he said, not ordinary criticism or dissent; but his words were somewhat clumsy, and he left himself open to the Red-scare stuff. In an editorial, the *Washington Post* denounced "The Ashcroft Smear." Bob Herbert in the *New York Times* wrote, "I experienced the disturbing sense of a 21st century official morphing alternately into J. Edgar Hoover and Joe McCarthy." Hendrik Hertzberg, in that week's *New Yorker*, had already called on Bush to fire Ashcroft. His name was muddier than ever.

BREASTGATE . . . PLUS, CATS: NOW AND FOREVER

The war aside, this AG has been swimming in bad raps. Maybe the baddest of them all has been Breastgate. Surely you are familiar with the statues that live in the Great Hall of the Justice Department: the Spirit of Justice (a lady) and the Majesty of Law (a gent). (Spirit has a nickname, by the way: Minnie Lou.) Because these statues are partially nude, they are noticed only during conservative Republican administrations. Minnie Lou and her one exposed breast became famous when photographers gleefully took their picture with Ed Meese, as he announced President Reagan's report on pornography back in the mid 1980s. The presence of the Breast was thought to have "stepped on" the administration's "message." Washington liberals are still yukking about that one today.

The Breast was pretty quiet during the eight years of Janet Reno. As one peeved administration official puts it, "No cameraman was ever at Reno's feet, trying to get a shot of her with that thing." But Minnie Lou's outstanding feature stormed back with Ashcroft. When President Bush visited the Justice Department to rededicate the building to Robert Kennedy, his advance men insisted on a nice blue backdrop: "TV blue," infinitely preferable to the usual dingy background of the Great Hall. Everyone thought the backdrop worked nicely—made for "good visuals," as they say. This was Deaverism, pure and simple. Ashcroft's people intended to keep using it.

An advance woman on his team had the bright idea of *buying* the backdrop: It would be cheaper than renting it repeatedly. So she did—without Ashcroft's knowledge, without his permission, without his caring, everyone in the department insists.

But ABC put out the story that Ashcroft, the old prude, had wanted the Breast covered up, so much did it offend his churchly sensibilities. *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd, ever clever, wrote that Ashcroft had forced a "blue burka" on Minnie Lou. Comedians had a field day (and are still having it). The *Washington Post* has devoted great space to the story, letting Cher, for example, tee off on it—as she went on to do on David Letterman's show.

And yet the story is complete and total bunk. First, Ashcroft had nothing to do with the purchase of the backdrop. Second, the backdrop had nothing to do with Breast aversion. But the story was just "too good to check," as we say, and it will probably live forever. Generations from now, if we're reading about John Ashcroft, we will read that he was the boob who draped the Boob. The story is ineffaceable.

Things get weirder: Andrew Tobias doubles as treasurer of the Democratic National Committee and a web columnist. He wrote that Ashcroft's advance team, scouting out the American embassy at The Hague, "saw cats in residence, and got nervous. They were worried there might be a calico cat. No, they were told, no calicos. Visible relief. Their boss, they explained, believes calico cats are signs of the devil. (The advance team also spied a statue of a naked woman in the courtyard, and discussed the possibility of its being covered for the visit, though that request was not ultimately made.)" Ashcroft's people sigh: Pure fabrication, an invention. Yet it entered the mainstream media—*New York Times*, no less—and added to the Legend of Ashcroft.

What else? It was objected that Ashcroft, even with *a war going on*, "found time" to "overturn" the law in Oregon permitting assisted suicide. Here again was the zealot pursuing his own fundamentalist ideology, and being a hypocrite too, for didn't he believe in "states' rights"? But Ashcroft was merely stating the obvious: that state law cannot nullify federal law, and that if supporters of assisted suicide wanted federal law to allow different state laws on the subject, they could go ahead and change the federal law—he would enforce it.

Then came the little Islamic contretemps. The conservative Christian journalist Cal Thomas reported that Ashcroft had made the following remark to him: "Islam is a religion in which God requires you to send your son to die for Him.

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Christianity is a faith in which God sends His son to die for you." Naturally, Arab groups and others pounced on Ashcroft for defaming Islam. Ashcroft, though—like other U.S. officials—has gone out of his way to show "sensitivity" to Muslims. Embarrassed, he explained that, in making that statement, he did not mean to refer to Islam itself, but to the radicals who kill in its name. According to an aide, Ashcroft had used this line—about radical Islam and sons and dying—many times before.

Certainly, Ashcroft could lie a little lower—could tend to his press image—but he doesn't seem willing to mute himself. He kicked up a fuss when he addressed the National Religious Broadcasters convention in Nashville. Speaking in rolling, religious tones, he contrasted "the way of God" and "the way of the terrorists." He said that "civilized people—Muslims [note that lead-off!], Christians, and Jews—all understand that the source of freedom and human dignity is the Creator." It was a stirring speech, belonging to a grand American tradition—and he was flayed for it, by the usual wall-of-separation zealots (who hold Ashcroft to be a religious zealot). One Ashcroft staffer grouses that, when Sen. Joe Lieberman, for example, quotes Scripture or otherwise waxes religious, the reaction tends to be "Ahhh." But when Ashcroft does: "Eeek!"

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Ashcroft may have graduated from Yale and Chicago—but he has his feet in an American earth that his fellow elites find alien, comical, or frightening.

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And, yes, it's true: Ashcroft may just break out in song on you. At the end of another recent speech, at a seminary in Charlotte, N.C., he launched into a song that he himself wrote, "Let the Eagle Soar," a sort of gospel/patriotic number that made the media hoot and howl. Footage of the AG in full vocal flight, so to speak, immediately became a running gag on the Letterman show. Ashcroft may have graduated from Yale College and the University of Chicago Law School—but he has his feet in an American earth that his fellow elites find alien, comical, or frightening.

Every day, John Ashcroft is hit for one thing or another, playing out his role as administration lightning rod. He is called a racist and a fanatic so often, it has almost become boring. Many liberals evidently want to be civil-liberties heroes, preventing, or at least wailing against, the fall of Ashcroftian night. They have not just a bogeyman but a straw man. The attorney general's backers are weary of seeing their man maligned, but they trust that the attacks are backfiring. Ashcroft's approval rating is high, around 75 percent. Even most Democratic voters tell pollsters they think Ashcroft is doing a good job—and it is an immense job, in new, peculiar, and daunting circumstances. So, if he needs it, he can take comfort in this: Not everyone is susceptible to the Ashcroft "mooma-jooma." **NR**

The Nukes We Need

Adapting our arsenal to today

RICHARD LOWRY

WHEN President Bush peered across the DMZ into North Korea recently, the most important things to see were out of sight. The North Koreans have two, related proficiencies: weapons production and tunneling. They built an underground city to conceal work on the No Dong ballistic missile, tested in 1993. In 1998, a tunnel complex big enough to house a plutonium production plant was discovered near a nuclear research center supposedly shut down under the 1994 U.S.-North Korean Agreed Framework. Meanwhile, the North Korea forward staging areas near the DMZ have more than 4,000 tunnels and bunkers.

The North Koreans may specialize mainly in backwardness, but in this they are on the cutting edge. Russia, China, Iraq, and other countries all have a new appreciation for the bunker mentality. The Chinese learned from NATO air campaigns in the Gulf and the Balkans that digging is the best way to counteract NATO's mastery of the air. As for the Russians, they have a tradition of digging going back to the Cold War, with some bunkers in Moscow estimated to be 1,000 feet deep, and one facility under Yamantau Mountain in the Urals reportedly as large as the area inside the Washington Beltway.

As the war on terrorism has now also become—at least in the president's rhetoric—a war on weapons of mass destruction (WMD), this drive underground cannot be ignored, especially in U.S. nuclear policy. The U.S. is finally—a decade late—taking account of the end of the Cold War by drastically reducing its operational strategic nuclear force from roughly 6,000 warheads to 2,000. But it makes no sense to react to the changed international environment only by scrapping the old force. The arsenal should also be updated to deal with new realities, most importantly by developing an earth-penetrating nuke, designed to target deeply buried WMD sites.

UNDERGROUND MEN

William Schneider, chairman of the Pentagon's Defense Science Board, explains that there has been a revolution in the economics of digging in recent years, thanks mostly to work on the Channel Tunnel. Run as a commercial venture, the Chunnel project emphasized innovation, producing technologies cheaper and more efficient than the traditional blast-and-cut methods. Now, according to Schneider, for a few million dollars a country can buy a Japanese, Finnish, or German machine that can dig an 18-meter-wide hole at a rate of 70 meters a day.

The U.S. has been working to counteract this new underground capability with conventional weapons. The GBU-28 "Bunker Buster"—a 5,000-lb. laser-guided bomb rushed into production for the Gulf War—has penetrated over 20 feet of concrete and more than 100 feet of earth in tests. Even bigger and better weapons are in the works. One is called "Big BLU,"

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a sort of plus-size daisy cutter (the 15,000-lb. bomb designed to blast clear a 600-meter area that has had a starring role in Afghanistan).

With these bombs, the military is essentially attempting to create something that has the power of a nuclear weapon without actually being nuclear. But the explosive force of conventional weapons can be pushed only so far. In addition, some bunkers are simply too deep and too hard. A recent Pentagon study concluded, "Even with the current strategy and acquisition initiatives, the United States will still not be able to hold all known or suspected Hard and Deeply Buried Targets at risk for destruction, especially the deep underground facilities."

This means that the only conventional force to which some targets will be vulnerable is an invasion or special-forces raid. But not all future conflicts will resemble Afghanistan or the Persian Gulf War, when the U.S. had total control of the skies and could operate almost at will. The ground-force option, in addition to risking American lives, would almost always fail what Keith Payne, head of the influential National Institute for Public Policy (NIPP), says should be a three-pronged test for taking out a dangerous WMD site in a crisis: It should be prompt, predictable (for our leaders, not the enemy), and definitive. A conventional raid might well be none of the above.

Corbis

'Deterrence depends on credibility.'

Which leaves nuclear weapons. "From the public record, I don't know of any nonnuclear way of dealing with this underground threat promptly and conclusively," says Payne, whose work has been the basis of the Bush administration's recent reevaluation of U.S. nuclear strategy. A nuke would have several advantages. It passes the prompt-predictable-definitive test. It also might not require intelligence as precise as that necessary for a conventional weapon—the explosive force provides room for error.

And it would destroy the targeted WMD agents rather than spread them as a conventional blast might. As a report from NIPP recently put it, chemical and biological agents "are extremely difficult to destroy (or sterilize) definitely, as opposed merely to disperse, except by means of the extraordinary heat and neutron flux generated by nuclear explosives." A nuke, of course, would create another hazard—radioactive fallout—but a low-yield weapon could be designed to minimize it.

THE MISSING NUKE

The problem is that we don't have this kind of weapon. Given that we have been in the nuclear business for 50 years, how is that possible? A host of strategic and technical reasons account for it, together with a perverse arms-control orthodoxy that has attempted to keep the U.S. arsenal as massive, inaccurate, and potentially horrific in its effects as possible.

Mutual Assured Destruction relied on the "balance of terror," on the willingness of the U.S. and the Soviet Union to hold their *populations* hostage. Any highly accurate or earth-penetrating weapon that instead would have been effective against specific military targets was considered "destabilizing"—a "war-fighting" weapon rather than a weapon of generalized terror. So, U.S. nukes tended to be designed for killing lots of Russians rather than destroying narrow military targets.

This was also simply easier as a technical matter. Getting a warhead to drive into the ground, then explode, is a technical challenge on the order of getting a car to drive through a wall, then have its left-turn signal flash. As nuclear expert Robert Barker explains, the weapon has to be fast enough to enter the ground, but not so fast as to destroy the warhead and the mechanism that triggers it. The warhead design, needless to say, must be very rugged. These difficulties, however, are probably surmountable. We dealt with some of them in creating nuclear artillery shells, which had to withstand enormous G-forces.

But arms-controllers aren't interested in having these problems surmounted. In fact, liberal Dr. Strangeloves want U.S. nuclear weapons to be as indiscriminate as possible. In their 1983 letter on nuclear weapons, the U.S. Catholic bishops opposed making nukes more accurate. This would seem to be in direct contradiction to Just War Theory, which emphasizes "discrimination" in order to minimize civilian casualties. The bishops' spirit lives on in 1994 congressional language prohibiting the U.S. from "research and development which could lead to the production by the United States of a new low-yield nuclear weapon, including a precision low-yield warhead."

There have, nonetheless, been attempts to update the U.S. arsenal. The Clinton administration worked to develop a penetrator without actually creating a "new" weapon. It gave an existing nuke, the B-61, a new needle-shaped hardened case. But the re-jiggered B-61 relies only on its terminal velocity—it is dropped, unpowered, from the air—to drive it into the earth. A true earth-penetrator would be powered so that it could hit the ground at much higher speeds. (The B-61 burrows about 20 feet deep into dry earth, whereas a true penetrator might need to go through 100 feet of granite.)

One advantage of the B-61 is that its yield can be adjusted downward from its high of 340 kilotons. A low-yield penetrator would probably be 10 kilotons or less (the Hiroshima bomb was 15 kilotons). The issue of size is so important because the U.S. wants a weapon that can be used in a crisis without the sort of massive collateral damage that would be simply unacceptable. As Stephen Younger, then an associate lab director at Los Alamos, wrote in a controversial June 2000 paper, "A reliance on high-yield strategic weapons could lead to 'self-deterrence'"—in other words, an unwillingness on the part of the U.S. to use its own weapons.

If the U.S. wants to develop a useful new nuke it will have to cross another arms-control taboo—against nuclear testing. In theory, it might be possible to jerry-rig a new weapon without testing, but that would be far from ideal as a technical matter. In any case, the "stockpile stewardship program," which was supposed to supplant testing with computer models, was drastically underfunded in the Clinton administration, limiting its

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usefulness. It is questionable whether we can retain confidence even in our current arsenal without testing, since our warheads were designed to last only 15 to 20 years.

In 1992, the first President Bush signed a bill instituting a voluntary moratorium on testing, although he made clear that he opposed it, and the Senate declined to make it permanent in 1999 by refusing to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Arms-controllers argue that if the U.S. eschews testing, it will create a new anti-nuclear "norm" around the world. But the Chinese, French, Indians, Pakistanis, and perhaps the Russians have tested subsequent to the U.S. moratorium.

For arms-controllers, the underlying rationale for the taboo against testing seems obvious: to prevent the U.S. from developing a new weapon, and ultimately to force the existing arsenal to die on the vine. It ensures that the U.S. has an aging, less and less reliable arsenal, built for a long-past strategic threat that bears little resemblance to the present one. The last new U.S. nuclear weapon was fielded in the 1980s, which means that it was designed in the 1970s. The longer the U.S. goes without designing and manufacturing a new weapon, the less capable it will be of doing so, as the expertise and manufacturing base wither away.

POWER OUTAGE

The thrust of the arms-controllers seems to come down to limiting U.S. power. Consider: Arms-controllers oppose American missile defenses because it is supposedly destabilizing for the U.S. to have sites that can be protected from rogue-state (or Russian or Chinese) attack. On the other hand, arms-controllers apparently don't mind rogue states' having sites that can be protected from U.S. attack. There is no effort to create an international treaty keeping rogues from digging deep bunkers. And arms-controllers oppose a new U.S. weapon that would be capable of holding these sites at risk. Assured destruction apparently looks much better when it applies only to the U.S.

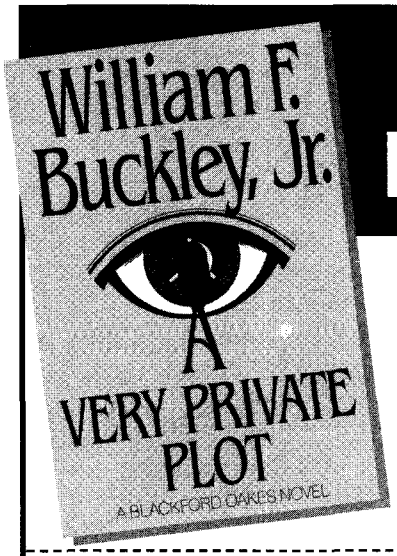
During the debate over missile defense last year, arms-controllers made nice sounds about deterrence (who needs missile defense when you have deterrence?). But deterrence depends on credibility. As long as the U.S. arsenal is chock-full of weapons that can only cause indiscriminate damage—and mass civilian casualties—it doesn't seem credible that we will use them, and so their deterrent value is lost. Which is exactly the way arms-controllers like it—the U.S. arsenal becomes, in effect, irrelevant.

Their complaint about a low-yield nuke is exactly that, in the words of Congress in 1994, it would "blur the distinction between nuclear and conventional war." Or, as a Federation of American Scientists report puts it, "adding low-yield warheads to the world's nuclear inventory simply makes their eventual use more likely." Actually, that's not quite true: It makes their use seem more plausible, which in turn makes their use *less* likely.

Without a low-yield penetrator, rogue-state leaders are able to have, in effect, a safe haven for themselves and their weapons of mass destruction. If they knew they didn't have any such protection, it might deter them from threatening or attacking the U.S. in the first place. This is how deterrence works. But deterrence also fails, in which case a low-yield penetrator might be necessary to preempt an imminent attack or to retaliate against one—and keep more from coming—by, say, hitting all of Saddam Hussein's command bunkers.

The Bush administration is at least making moves toward updating the arsenal. The Minuteman missile is having its 1970s-era guidance system overhauled, so some attention is being paid to applying the benefits of new precision technology to existing nukes. The administration has also undertaken a study of the need for a new earth-penetrating low-yield nuke. Developing one would mean running into the teeth of congressional and international opposition, and it is, of course, extremely unlikely that such a weapon would ever be used. Conventional options would almost always be preferable.

The key word, however, is "almost." Nuclear weapons have always been available as a bad option that might be necessary only if every other option is worse. The world, unfortunately, didn't stop offering us bad options back in 1989. We should stop pretending otherwise. **NR**



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Get Tight

Now more than ever, immigration should be curtailed

MARK KRIKORIAN

SINCE Sept. 11, a new consensus appears to have developed on the need for tighter immigration enforcement and border controls. Gone are the days when the *Wall Street Journal* repeatedly called for a constitutional amendment declaring that "there shall be open borders." After 9/11, even the libertarian-leftist united front for open borders, which so successfully obstructed immigration enforcement in the past, has had at least to pretend to support border control.

This change has manifested itself in many ways. The USA Patriot Act, last year's major piece of antiterrorism legislation, contained immigration-related provisions—including one that gave the INS and State Department access to the FBI's criminal databases. Legislation passed by the House and pending in the Senate, cosponsored by Sens. Feinstein, Kyl, Brownback, and Kennedy (yes, Ted Kennedy), would mandate the creation of a visa document for "nonimmigrant" foreigners (e.g., tourists, students, and businessmen) that would contain a fingerprint or other identifier, to help the INS keep track of the visitors.

The agencies responsible for immigration have also made changes. The INS, for instance, decided that it should start looking for the 300,000-plus foreigners who have absconded after being ordered deported, and these names are being entered into the FBI's national crime database. And the State Department began requiring more intensive examination of visa applications from young men from Muslim countries (the policy has since been expanded to cover young men from all countries).

There is much left to accomplish in the area of border control; for instance, the INS still has a laughably small number of investigators, and the State Department's manual for visa officers still says that "advocating terrorism, through oral or written statements, is usually not a sufficient ground for finding an applicant ineligible." But while the details matter, the principle of sovereign borders is no longer a matter of mainstream debate.

AN OVERWORKED INS

One important taboo remains: We can't discuss the levels of immigration as a homeland-security issue. Indeed, the idea of any connection between immigration and terrorism continues to be dismissed by many people. INS commissioner James Ziglar, for instance, observed that in discussing terrorism, "we're not talking about immigration, we're talking about evil." He has even employed the "if-X-then-the-terrorists-win" cliché, saying: "If, in response to the events of September 11, we engage in excess and shut out what has made America great, then we will have given the terrorists a far greater victory than they could have hoped to achieve."

Advocacy groups have made the same point. Cecilia Muñoz of the National Council of La Raza gamely averred that "there's no relationship between immigration and terrorism." Jeanne Butterfield, executive director of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (and former head of the Palestine Solidarity Committee), echoed that sentiment: "I don't think the events of [Sept. 11] can be attributed to the failure of our immigration laws."

And indeed, to argue that cuts in legal immigration are necessary for homeland security might appear a bit opportunistic, like apologists for farm subsidies talking about "food security." After all, it's only Muslim fanatics, not Mexican dishwashers or Filipino nurses, who are engaging in terrorism.

But there are compelling reasons that a reduction in the legal admission of foreign citizens is imperative for homeland security. The first reason is a very practical one: The INS simply cannot function as it should at the current level of admissions.

Now, one might argue that more INS funding would solve this problem; and that is, in fact, what Congress and the administration have in mind. The agency's budget this year will be $5.5 billion, a 10 percent increase. This additional funding would be desperately needed even without concerns over homeland security. The General Accounting Office reported in May 2001 that the receipt of new applications (for green cards, citizenship, temporary work permits, etc.) has increased 50 percent over the past six years and the backlog of unresolved applications has quadrupled to nearly 4 million. The number of citizenship applications filed in the 1990s was about 6.9 million, triple the level of the 1980s; temporary admissions nearly doubled in the 1990s, to more than 30 million; and the number of (very labor-intensive) applications for asylum in the 1990s was nearly 1 million, more than double the level of the 1980s.

The crush of work has created an organizational culture wherein "staff are rewarded for the timely handling of petitions rather than for careful scrutiny of their merits," in the words of a January 2002 GAO report. The pressure to move things through the system has led to "rampant" and "pervasive" fraud, with one official estimating that 20 to 30 percent of all applications involve fraud. The GAO says, in its understated fashion, that "the goal of providing immigration benefits in a timely manner to those who are legally entitled to them may conflict with the goal of preserving the integrity of the legal immigration system."

There might well be large organizations that could handle such a crush of work while assuming vast new responsibilities, especially if they are provided with increased resources. But the INS is not just any government bureaucracy: It's a total backwater, the Rodney Dangerfield of federal agencies. Its computer systems are abysmally out-of-date and fragmented; this stems from a decision in the 1970s not to automate the files, in order to preserve low-level clerical jobs. A serious government agency would never have been allowed to paint itself into such a corner. As then-commissioner Doris Meissner told *Government Executive* magazine in 1999, "You don't overcome a history like that in four to five years."

There have been various plans to address this problem through reorganization; but such plans, even backed by a fat

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bankroll, won't suffice. The only way to give the INS the breathing room it needs to put its house in order—and to address homeland-security concerns—is to reduce its workload. Some demands on the agency cannot be reduced: Tourists will keep coming, legal immigrants will keep applying for citizenship. But the admission of new immigrants and foreign students and workers is an area where the INS's load can be lightened dramatically. Cutting legal immigration back to the spouses and minor children of American citizens, plus a handful of genuine Einsteins and authentic refugees, and reducing the current caps (or placing caps for the first time) on various student and worker visas would provide the essential breathing room needed if the INS is ever going to fulfill its role in homeland defense.

ASSIMILATION FIRST AND FOREMOST

There's also an important long-term strategic reason to cut the overall number of immigrants. Immigrant communities act as the sea within which, to borrow Mao's phrase, terrorists can swim like fish. A *New York Times* reporter wrote shortly after Sept. 11 that there are many reasons Islamic terrorists prefer Germany as a base, "among them the fact that the terrorists could blend into a society with a large Muslim population and more foreigners than any other in Europe." Another *Times* story observed that this is true in our own country as well: "The hijackers' stay [in Paterson, N.J.] also shows how, in an area that speaks many languages and keeps absorbing immigrants, a few young men with no apparent means of support and no furniture can settle in for months without drawing attention."

Promoting the Americanization of immigrants by reducing the ongoing flow of newcomers would help reduce the prevalence of community characteristics that allow terrorists to operate with relative impunity—transiency, inability to speak English, attachment to old loyalties and prejudices, and mistrust of the new country's institutions (such as the police). It's not that Muslim immigrant communities are willingly shielding terrorists, but rather that the insularity of immigrant communities provides cover for the terrorists.

In his address to the joint session of Congress after Sept. 11, President Bush said that "al-Qaeda is to terror what the Mafia is to crime." This comparison is instructive. While immigration was ongoing, and for at least a generation after it was stopped in the 1920s, law enforcement had very little luck in penetrating the Mafia—in fact, the very idea of organized crime, as opposed to scattered urban gangsters, was dismissed. But with the end of immigration, the assimilation of Italian immigrants and their children accelerated, with more widespread use of English, gradual erosion of Old World attitudes such as *omertà* (the code of silence), dispersion out of ethnic enclaves, and the development of a sense of real membership and ownership in America. It was this process—what the Hudson Institute's John Fonte has called "patriotic assimilation"—that drained the waters within which the Mafia had been able to swim. This allowed law enforcement to do its job more effectively, and resulted in the eventual crippling of the Mob. In the same way, accelerating assimilation in Muslim immigrant communities by reducing immigration will make it harder for terrorists to operate there—harder to find cover, harder to recruit sympathizers, harder to raise funds.

And it's clear that Osama bin Laden has been working to get immigrants to join him, with some success. The *San Francisco Chronicle* last November detailed the story of two naturalized U.S. citizens from Egypt who were part of al-Qaeda. The report quoted an Arabic-language newspaper account about the two men: "Bin Laden praised their efforts and emphasized the necessity of recruiting as many Muslims with American citizenship as possible into the organization."

But is the development of ethnic criminal gangs a sufficient rationale for reducing immigration? After all, we also have Russian organized crime in our country, brought by immigrants, and other ethnic gangs. But here's the key: Terrorism is not an ordinary criminal activity. Its goal is not localized and digestible, as a modest level of crime is in such a large society; it is, rather, an extremely broad-based undermining of our national security, a threat to our very survival—and thus a matter of overriding importance.

KEEP THEM OUT—AND DRY THEM UP

Limiting immigration from the Islamic world would not only deprive terrorists of domestic cover, but would actually impede terrorism worldwide. This is because radical Islamist groups have broad freedom to operate in only two kinds of places—in weak states (like Afghanistan, Somalia, and Yemen) and in the West. Donald Rumsfeld is making real progress on the first problem; immigration cuts are needed to address the second.

We could, of course, simply bar all immigrants and tourists from Muslim countries. But there are two problems with this. The first is that trying to bar arrivals from Muslim countries isn't likely to keep out terrorists. As it is, applicants from countries formally listed as sponsors of terrorism have long faced a higher bar to entry, so the Sept. 11 terrorists came from Muslim countries not on the official list. Now that we are focusing more scrutiny on most Muslim-majority countries, we are likely to see terrorists coming instead from countries with large and aggrieved Muslim minorities—the Philippines, India, China, Russia. In the unlikely event we were to bar everyone from those countries, then the terrorists would use Muslim citizens of Western Europe and Canada; this is likely to be especially troublesome, since visas are not required for citizens of these countries.

But there is an even greater question, one of principle. Special exclusions for Muslim immigrants would be a throwback to the national-origin quotas of the 1920s, the elimination of which was the only positive aspect of the hapless 1965 immigration-law changes. Focusing on Muslims is sensible as triage, as a way to decide where to start enforcing the law, as the Justice Department is doing with 6,000 Middle Eastern deportation absconders. But constructing, for the long term, a Muslim-specific immigration policy would be contrary to American principles and politically out of the question. Our response, then, can only be to cut immigration across the board, regardless of the religion the immigrant claims to profess.

It has been clear for some time that current immigration policy is an anachronism, because of the harm it inflicts on the private economy, the public fisc, and overall national cohesion. But the Sept. 11 attacks have made change a much graver matter. Cuts in legal immigration would contribute to improved security by permitting more efficient management and by denying terrorists cover. We should not fail to act. **NR**

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Oh, No! That '70s Show

Against Carterism in energy policy

JERRY TAYLOR

BELL-BOTTOMS are back, disco lives, and one of the hottest shows on television is a rip-off of *Happy Days*. And while we no longer have a southern governor in the White House, we do have a Texas governor who, like his Seventies counterpart, has put a lot of political chips on the table to pass a hotly disputed energy bill. There are some differences, of course, but the story line is the same: Unless the feds do something to change our consumption habits, pattern of investment, fuel mix, and appetite for foreign oil, the American economy is headed for dark days indeed.

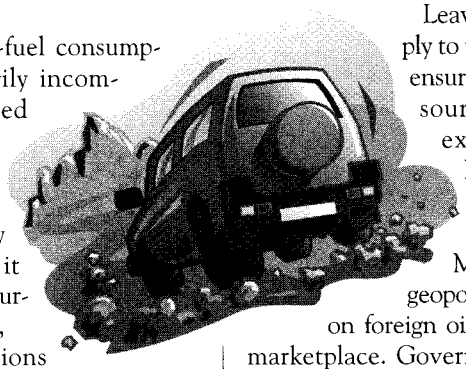
Washington has always been convinced that energy is somehow different from other commodities, different enough that it can't be left to the market. Nothing, however, could be further from the truth.

At the forefront of this debate, once again, is conservation. Yet there's no more need to conserve energy than there is to conserve Post-it notes. Despite the occasional spike, energy prices have been declining for a century, showing that energy is becoming more abundant—not more scarce—with time. It's often thought of as a fixed and finite resource, but energy is in fact a manufactured product. And as our technology advances, our ability to efficiently manufacture energy advances along with it.

Moreover, market signals provide all the incentive necessary to encourage both conservation and the exploration and development of new energy sources. Economists who study energy markets have discovered that in the long run, demand for energy will reflect its availability—that is, if energy resources become 20 percent more expensive, demand will decline by 20 percent. Why additional conservation efforts are necessary beyond this is a mystery.

Of course, the flip side of the coin is that when energy prices drop 20 percent, demand will in the long run increase by 20 percent. This drives green types crazy, but obsessing about conservation when prices fall, as they have over time, is no more rational than the crazed general's obsessing in *Dr. Strangelove* about the conservation of "precious bodily fluids."

What about the environmental costs of energy consumption, costs that are not reflected in prices? Government, we're told, must involve itself in energy markets because that's the most efficient way to reduce pollution.



But growing fossil-fuel consumption is not necessarily incompatible with improved environmental quality. Since 1970, for instance, energy consumption has risen by 41 percent, most of it from fossil fuels. But during that same period, sulfur-dioxide emissions (which can cause acid rain) have dropped by 39 percent; emissions of volatile organic compounds (a major contributor to urban smog) have dropped by 42 percent; carbon-monoxide emissions (the main cause of wintertime smog) have dropped by 28 percent; and large particulate-matter emissions (the main airborne cause of lung irritation) have dropped by 75 percent.

There are far more efficient ways to reduce pollution than by restricting fossil-fuel consumption. Widgets put on the end of smokestacks and tailpipes are cheaper anti-pollution investments than are "green" energy sources. The same holds true for greenhouse-gas emissions. Back in 1998, when President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers issued a report to demonstrate that compliance with the Kyoto Protocol could be achieved without great expense, it was the substitution of natural gas for coal-fired electricity, and a robust international trading regime for greenhouse-gas emissions—not "green" energy or crash conservation programs—that turned out to be the elixirs that would keep compliance costs down.

Also, the claim that environmental costs aren't reflected in energy prices is not really true. The costs of complying with anti-pollution laws are passed on to consumers. Are these regulatory costs greater than, equal to, or less than the environmental damages incurred by energy consumption? Harvard's W. Kip Viscusi has examined exactly that question, taking EPA data as an analytic point of departure. Viscusi and his colleagues found that natural gas was probably overtaxed from an environmental perspective, that oil was taxed correctly, and that coal was probably somewhat undertaxed. So environmental costs are already more or less reflected in energy prices.

Leaving the energy supply to the marketplace will ensure that the cheapest sources of energy are exploited first. But here's the rub—the cheapest source of energy lies in the Middle East, and the geopolitical cost of relying on foreign oil is unpriced in the marketplace. Government, it's alleged, must therefore intervene in energy markets to reduce our reliance on foreign oil.

To paraphrase Jeremy Bentham, this is not simply nonsense—it's nonsense on stilts. Even if every drop of oil we consumed were to come from Texas, a cutback in OPEC production would raise domestic oil prices just as high as it would if all of our oil were to come from Saudi Arabia. This is because there are no regional markets for oil—only global markets—and regional prices invariably rise to the world price. In 1979, for instance, Great Britain was "energy independent": All of its crude oil came from the North Sea. Yet the price spike of 1979 hit Britain as hard as it hit Japan—a country dependent on imports for its oil. No country can wall itself off from the world market.

The embargo fear is likewise unwar-

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ranted. Once oil is in a tanker or refinery, there's no controlling its destination. During the 1973 embargo, some of the oil OPEC exported to Europe was simply resold to the United States; the rest served to compensate for the non-OPEC oil that was diverted to the U.S. market. Then-Saudi oil minister Sheik Ahmed Zaki Yamani later conceded that the embargo "did not imply that we could reduce imports to the United States . . . the world is really just one market. So the embargo was more symbolic than anything else."

Energy prices seem mysteriously volatile, suggesting to many that conspiracies are at work. The widespread fear of unbridled energy markets is reflected in the incredibly tangled regulatory webs spun by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, the Justice Department, and the various state public utility commissions.

But conspiracies aren't necessary to explain prices. In the short run, energy supply and demand are relatively inelastic. Accordingly, small changes in either can send prices spiraling temporarily upward or downward. And since there are few available substitutes for gasoline or electricity, consumers feel helpless against "the gougers" in a way they wouldn't if, say, tomato prices were to go crazy.

Producers are also victimized by the market's volatility. A recession in East Asia, for instance, can send oil prices so low that no rig in the Lower 48 can turn a profit (which is pretty much what happened a few years ago). Thus both consumers and producers will badger government to protect them when prices undergo their occasional—but dramatic—rides.

Yet intervention not only distorts important signals in the marketplace, it robs consumers of energy savings in good times and producers of the revenue they need to offset their losses in bad times. In fact, it was exactly this kind of price control and windfall-profit taxing that caused the energy crisis of the 1970s.

Parts of the energy marketplace are more competitive than others. But the idea that government regulation can control natural monopolies, even where they are found to exist, is more a matter of faith than fact. University of Chicago economist George Stigler in the 1950s, economist Thomas Gale Moore in the 1970s, and several industry economists in the 1980s all found that public utility commissions are demonstrably incapable of keeping monopolists from charging monopoly prices. In a famous and still-unrefuted essay, Chicago law professor and federal judge Richard Posner showed some years ago that government regulation of monopolies—even natural monopolies—has actually not improved the efficiency of markets.

To some extent, government's role in energy markets can't be helped. The feds own about a third of America's landmass, and much of that land holds valuable oil, gas, and coal reserves. Federal environmental regulation also greatly affects energy industries. In the former case, economically valuable federal land should be sold off; this is the only objective way to determine whether some lands are more valuable as energy reserves than as sanctuaries for wildlife. In the latter case, government should decentralize regulation to the greatest extent possible and rely on market mechanisms to ensure that the most efficient means of pollution control are employed. Throw in a zero-subsidy policy and eliminate price restraints, and that's the extent of what an energy strategy should look like.

Unfortunately, the Bush energy bill completely misses the mark. While one could certainly make a case for opening up a small part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil development, it would probably expand global oil supplies only a bit more than 1 percent a year—hardly enough to keep the OPEC cartel managers awake at night. The rest of the plan is two parts flotsam to one part compromise, compromises supposedly necessary to buy off environmentalist support for drilling. It's not for nothing that Vice President Dick Cheney boasts that eleven of the top twelve energy priorities of the Sierra Club can be found in the administration's energy proposal, most of which survived in one form or another in the House energy bill passed late last year.

Energy markets are important, but that's no reason for government to mess with them. It's really the most compelling reason for government to leave them alone. NR

Drilling Is Destiny

This won't hurt a bit. Really.

WILLIAM TUCKER

LAST summer, Shell Oil entertained reporters at its Houston headquarters to demonstrate new oil-drilling technologies. It was an awesome performance.

In a darkened "virtual reality" room, geophysicist Mark Stockwell showed how seismic data from the Gulf of Mexico are being used to create three-dimensional images of the rock crust beneath the ocean surface. Petroleum engineers, geologists, and drillers use polarized glasses to view a huge display screen that allows them to conduct a "virtual exploration" of complex underground formations. "Bringing our field people into the VR center for a single three-day session saves us $20 million in unsuccessful drilling," says Stockwell.

Indeed, drilling technology improves almost monthly. The industry has developed huge "floating-production storage and offloading facilities," billion-dollar behemoths larger than battleships. Instead of having to be connected physically to concrete platforms on the ocean floor, these gigantic barges float over the drill site, maintaining their position through global-positioning satellites; this makes it easier to drill on the deep ocean floor. Every few days a tanker comes and drains the storage reservoir, eliminating the need for pipelines as well.

Oil rigs also now use "multilateral drilling," a technique that minimizes environmental impact. In the old days, drill bits attached to five-inch steel pipes went straight into the ground in search of pockets of gas and oil. Missing an oil pocket meant building another rig and punching another hole in the ground. Now coiled titanium tubing—with pipes just one inch in diameter—spreads out

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from the rig at angles of up to 90 degrees, reaching pockets as far as five miles away.

Multilateral drilling is designed for drilling in pristine areas such as the Rocky Mountains, where about 5 billion barrels of oil are believed to lie, and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which may contain 10.4 billion barrels—the equivalent of more than half of our current reserves. (The Persian Gulf, by way of comparison, has reserves of 600 billion barrels, of which 260 billion are in Saudi Arabia.)

Although ANWR is larger than West Virginia, encompassing 19 million acres, drilling would take place only on the 1.5-million-acre coastal plain, a flat, featureless terrain 1,300 miles from the North Pole. Oil would be sought only beneath 2,000 acres and—thanks to multilateral drilling—the actual rigs would occupy only five or six acres. "There's a lot of oil still out there," says John Felmy, chief economist at the American Petroleum Institute. "The only question is whether we're going to be allowed to drill it."

Unfortunately, even if we do overcome these self-imposed limitations, America remains—as Felmy puts it—"a declining oil province." Despite all the new finds and improved technology, both American oil production and reserve capacity have steadily declined since peaking in 1970. In that year, we consumed 5.4 billion barrels of oil while producing 3.6 billion; our reserves were 39 billion. In 2001, we consumed 7.1 billion and produced only 3.2 billion, while reserves sank to 22 billion. Increasing imports, of course, has made up the difference. President Nixon became concerned when foreign oil suddenly jumped from 29 percent to 35 percent of domestic consumption between 1972 and 1973, just before OPEC dropped the hammer; in 2001, we imported 59.2 percent of our oil, the highest in our history. The figure continues to rise almost every year.

Efforts at conservation and the development of new reserves have helped us keep abreast, but have not diminished our dependence on the Persian Gulf. In 1977, 33.6 percent of our oil came from OPEC countries, and 13.3 percent from the Persian Gulf alone. In the first eleven months of 2001, 27.9 percent of our oil came from OPEC, and 13.9 percent from the Gulf, including 3.7 percent from—gulp!—Iraq. The only trend has been the slightly diminishing importance of non-Persian Gulf OPEC countries (Venezuela, source of 8 percent of our oil; Nigeria, source of 4.5 percent) coupled with an increasing reliance on non-OPEC nations (Canada, source of 9 percent; Mexico, 7 percent; Norway, 1.8 percent; the U.K., 1.5 percent; and—gulp again!—Andres Pastrana's Colombia, 1.4 percent). We could start boycotting Saudi Arabian oil tomorrow (8.6 percent of our consumption) and easily make up the difference, but the way international markets work, the Saudis would hardly notice. The gesture would be purely political.

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Loosening our ties to world oil markets remains a chimera.

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So what, if anything, should we do about it? The truth is, barring some completely unanticipated development, we will continue to import more than 50 percent of our oil into the foreseeable future. "We're not addicted to oil, as some people claim," says John Lichtblau of the Petroleum Industry Research Foundation. "People complain we consume 25 percent of the world's oil, but we also produce 25 percent of the world's GNP. Our consumption has increased only one and a half percent per year while GNP has risen about three percent."

Currently we use 68 percent of our oil for transportation, 24 percent for industrial purposes, 6 percent for home and commercial heating, and 2 percent to generate electricity. The 24 percent for industry isn't likely to be reduced. In the home-heating category, a slight move has occurred from heating oil to natural gas, but natural gas has run up against its own supply problems. And there's little left to cut from the electricity-generation category: Over the past 25 years, coal has supplanted oil and now generates about half our electricity. Now natural gas is replacing coal, and nuclear energy provides a solid 20 percent.

This leaves transportation as the most attractive target for reductions—but here, significant reforms will not be easy. Of the oil in the transportation category, 56 percent is used in cars and SUVs, 16 percent in commercial trucks, and 11 percent for jet fuel, with the remainder divided among trains, the military, and other small users. Despite a few high-profile experiments, natural gas isn't practical for powering cars. The fuel must be stored under high pressure and cuts performance.

Environmentalists have long promoted electric cars or vehicles run on fuel cells powered by hydrogen, without ever acknowledging that electricity and hydrogen are not energy sources but energy carriers; the electricity must first be generated—from coal, nuclear, gas, hydro, or some other natural resource. Raw hydrogen is not sitting around waiting to be mined, but must be produced from natural gas or generated by the electrolysis of water. This leads us back to electricity. Nuclear power is the obvious solution to all these problems, but environmentalists have stonewalled it—though nuclear offers a long-term, pollution-free source of energy.

Perhaps the one promising strategy for reducing oil consumption is the new "hybrid cars," which mate electric motors and gas-powered engines to produce greater fuel efficiency. Honda's new Insight has a three-cylinder, 67-horsepower gasoline engine that gets a boost from an electric motor while accelerating or climbing hills. Toyota's Prius accelerates to 15 mph with its electric motor, then adds the force of its 1.5-liter, 70-horsepower gas engine. Both electric motors recharge from an on-board generator, eliminating the need for lengthy "refueling" stops.

Other manufacturers are jumping on the bandwagon, and hybrid cars may soon make some impact on gas consumption—but drivers may eliminate these savings by using their cars more. In either case, loosening our ties to world oil markets remains a chimera. "The real effort should be toward diversifying supply and preparing to deal with sudden interruptions," says Lichtblau. "That's why we have the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. We may whittle down the growth in consumption and stem the decline in domestic supplies, but we're never going to achieve energy independence. That dream died with the Carter administration." NR

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Gas and Gasbags . . .

. . . or, the open road and its enemies

HENRY PAYNE & DIANE KATZ

ANY crisis in the Middle East inevitably prompts Washington to scapegoat the automobile as a threat to national security. The dust had barely settled on lower Manhattan last fall before calls went forth—from pundits and pols across the spectrum—to relinquish our "gas-guzzlers" in the name of energy independence.

But just as the Cassandras will dominate media coverage of energy, so will Middle Eastern oil continue to fuel America's vehicles for the foreseeable future. Simple economics, geography, and consumer choice all demand it.

Since Sept. 11, Washington has mobilized to end our "dangerous addiction" to foreign energy sources. Sens. John Kerry and John McCain are proposing dramatic increases in federal fuel-economy standards. The energy package crafted by majority leader Tom Daschle advocates "biodiesels," and the Natural Resources Defense Council is insisting that we could cut gasoline consumption by 50 percent over ten years—if only the feds would mandate what and where we drove.

Even the "oil men" in the Bush administration have advocated doling out millions in research subsidies for hydrogen fuel cells that supposedly would replace the internal-combustion engine. The project, Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham announced in January, is "rooted in President Bush's call to reduce American reliance on foreign oil."

In fact, the price of oil has declined since Sept. 11, as it consistently has for decades, and with producers scattered all over the world, no single nation or region can stop the flow.

But supporters of a comprehensive energy policy seem undeterred by these realities. "Logic," Robert Samuelson writes in the *Washington Post*, "is no defense against instability. We need to make it harder for [Middle Easterners] to use the oil weapon and take steps to protect ourselves if it is used. Even if we avoid trouble now, the threat will remain."

Past efforts to attain a petroleum-free utopia, however, have largely failed. For example, despite three decades of federal fuel-economy standards, oil imports as a share of U.S. consumption have risen from 35 to 59 percent.

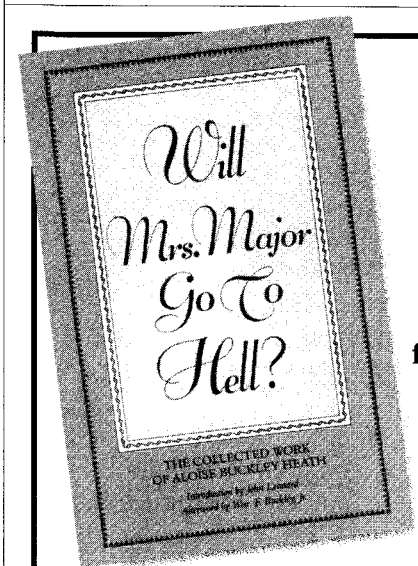
A market-based solution, such as a gas tax, is the most obvious approach to cutting consumption, but even environmentalists concede that proposing one would spell political suicide. Moreover, gas taxes are an expensive solution and come with no guarantee of energy independence. The European Union, for example, taxes gas up to $4 per gallon—and still imports over half its oil.

So instead of enraging consumers at the pump, Washington has largely relied on backdoor taxes.

The regulatory regime known as CAFE (Corporate Average Fuel Economy) was hatched in the wake of the oil-price shocks of the early 1970s, when sedans still made up most of the nation's fleet. Instead of the redesigned smaller, lighter, and less powerful vehicles, however, consumers flocked to minivans, small trucks, and sport utility vehicles, which are held to a lower CAFE standard (20.7 mpg versus the 27.5 mpg required for cars).

Today, both passenger cars and light trucks are more efficient than ever, having improved 114 percent and 56 percent, respectively, since 1974. But gasoline is so cheap, despite continuing Middle Eastern crises, that on average

Henry Payne is a freelance writer, and an editorial cartoonist for the *Detroit News*. Diane Katz is director of science, environment, and technology policy at the Mackinac Center for Public Policy (Michigan).



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Americans are driving twice as many miles as in years past.

A recent study by H. Sterling Burnett of the National Center for Policy Analysis found that raising CAFE standards by 40 percent—as Kerry and others recommend—would not "reduce future U.S. dependence on foreign oil." CAFE's only function is to keep regulators busy calculating elaborate formulas for determining compliance in which manufacturers then look for loopholes. (CAFE requires that a manufacturer's trucks meet an *average* standard of 20.7 mpg. Thus DaimlerChrysler AG, for example, designates its popular PT Cruiser as a "truck" in order to offset the low mpg of its large SUVs, such as the Dodge Durango.)

Worse, stricter CAFE standards would surely undermine the very economic security that proponents vow to protect. The profits of U.S. automakers—and tens of thousands of UAW jobs—depend on sales of SUVs and light trucks. According to an analysis by Andrew N. Kleit, a professor at Pennsylvania State University, the Kerry CAFE proposal would reduce the profits of General Motors by $3.8 billion, of Ford by $3.4 billion, and of DaimlerChrysler by $2 billion. Foreign manufacturers, which largely specialize in smaller vehicles, would see a profit *increase* of $4.4 billion.

Evidently hoping to shield automakers from a CAFE assault—and to win PR points for expanded domestic drilling—the Bush administration has embraced the latest alternative-fuel fad: the hydrogen fuel cell.

The Bush plan replaces the Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles, Al Gore's vain attempt to produce an affordable, emissions-free family sedan capable of 80 mpg by 2004. Over eight years, Washington pumped more than $1.5 billion into the program—in addition to the $1.5 billion sunk into it by the Big Three. In its annual review of the project last August, the National Research Council judged the super-car goals to be inherently "unrealistic."

The Bush plan has drawn broad political support. Former Clinton chief of staff John Podesta cheers, "The next step is hydrogen-powered fuel-cell vehicles. But the only way to get these vehicles out of the lab and onto the road is with incentives and requirements aimed at producing 100,000 vehicles by 2010, 2.5 million by 2020."

But the 100-year dominance of conventional internal-combustion engines over alternatives is no accident. A quick primer on the complexities of hydrogen power helps explain why.

Hydrogen's status as the new darling of the sustainable-energy movement is understandable. Its promise lies first in its performance: Unlike ethanol, it supplies more energy per pound than gasoline. When used to power an automobile, its only emission is water—making it especially attractive to an industry already under pressure from clean-air and global-warming rules. And hydrogen is one of the most plentiful elements on the planet.

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Politically correct, misguided energy schemes will not make America more independent.

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The trouble is, hydrogen always comes married to another element—as in methane gas or water.

Most fuel-cell technology today relies on hydrogen extracted from methane, in a process that emits large quantities of greenhouse gases. And as *Car and Driver* magazine's technical analyst, Patrick Bedard, explains, domestic sources of methane are "[t]oo limited to serve any significant demand for automobiles." A study by the Argonne National Laboratory concluded that the U.S. would have to look to foreign sources—primarily in Russia and Iran, and in other Middle East nations.

Goodbye, oil dependence. Hello, methane dependence.

Given these hurdles, attention is turning instead to electrolysis—the extraction of hydrogen from water, which is readily obtainable along America's ample coasts. Electrolysis is, however, the most energy-intensive process of any fuel alternative; studies differ on whether it would consume more carbon-based fuels than the use of hydrogen would save. What is certain, points out Stanford University professor John McCarthy, is that "the advantage of hydrogen, if you have to burn carbon fuels (coal, oil, or gas) to manufacture it, would be negligible."

In other words, McCarthy explains, the unspoken truth about hydrogen is that "it is a synonym for nuclear power."

Leading researchers in the field—including David Scott of the University of Victoria in Canada, Cesare Marchetti of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, and Jesse Ausubel of Rockefeller University—say that the only way to produce liquid hydrogen in the mass quantities needed for transportation is with a major investment in nuclear power. Says Scott: "[A]pplying the most elementary numeracy, nuclear fission is the only realistic option."

Ironically, many of the political voices now embracing hydrogen fuel are the same ones that have prevented the construction of a single new U.S. nuclear plant in 25 years. Ausubel has written in *The Industrial Physicist* magazine that "understanding how to use nuclear power, and its acceptance, will take a century or more."

For now, the answer is still gasoline. Compared with the technical barriers to developing alternative fuels, there already exist numerous market mechanisms to mitigate potential oil shortages. As suggested by Donald Losman, a National Defense University economist, these include: stockpiling, futures contracts, diversifying the supplier base, and relaxing the restrictions that currently mandate some 13 different fuel blends in 30 cities.

Dramatic improvements in fuel efficiency also could be achieved if Washington allowed automakers to market diesel-powered vehicles. In Germany, for example, Volkswagen mass markets the 80-mpg Lupo, which is powered by a direct-injection diesel engine. But that's anathema to American greens who insist—without evidence—that diesel's particulate emissions are dangerous to public health.

All fuels require trade-offs, of course. But politically correct, misguided energy schemes will not make America more independent. Gasoline remains by far the best deal we have. **NR**

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THE LONG VIEW

By Rob Long

********** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **********

THE PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced today that the proposed Office of Strategic Influence would be "shelved indefinitely."

Responding to questions from the Pentagon press corps, Secretary Rumsfeld made the announcement "in the context of providing the media and the American people with as much information as we can," adding that "the true nature of the proposed office has been distorted and misunderstood in the past few weeks."

The proposed Office of Strategic Influence came under scrutiny from media watchdogs when it was revealed that part of the Office's mission would include the dissemination of "disinformation" and "misinformation" and the use of "psy-ops" (psychological operations) techniques to confuse our enemies.

For further information, call Pentagon Press Services.

********** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **********

THE PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Pentagon officials denied today reports that the proposed Office of Strategic Influence was not actually closed down, and that previous reports of its closure were its first acts of "disinformation" and "misinformation."

"The Office of Strategic Influence is totally shut down," Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told reporters today. "This is true. I mean, actually true."

"It hadn't really started yet," Secretary Rumsfeld declared to reporters, "so in a sense it wasn't closed down so much as the idea of it was shelved."

Over the weekend, reporters began to wonder if an office supposedly dedicated to spreading confusing and misleading information could be trusted. "That'd be clever," one reporter said today. "You say you're shutting something down when in actuality you're starting it up—talk about disinformation." "Or maybe," another added, "it was always up and running, and the proposal and fake 'shutdown' were designed to throw people off the scent." "Or, maybe," said a third, "it was never going to be established in the first place, and this is just a 'double-fake.'" "Or maybe," chimed in the first, "they expected this all along, knowing that we'd question the whole thing, causing us to question everything, the initial proposal, the fake shutdown, the false press releases, everything." The reporters sat silently for a moment.

For further information, call Pentagon Press Services.

********** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **********

THE PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, D.C.

In the wake of enormous confusion today, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld once again clarified the Department's decision regarding the proposed Office of Strategic Influence.

"While we consider it paramount," the Secretary said, "to keep our enemies off guard and guessing as to our next move, we concluded that opening an Office of Strategic Influence was not necessary at this time."

But members of the Pentagon press corps remain confused. "Are you saying that it's not necessary to open one because you've always had one up and running?" asked one reporter.

"Good Lord, what?" answered the Secretary.

"Isn't your denial just a smokescreen? You knew all along that we'd question your announcement yesterday and you knew we'd question this one today. So when you say that you haven't started a campaign of disinformation you knew we'd assume that was disinformation and believe the opposite, when in fact that's the disinformation and the opposite isn't true."

"I'm sorry?" asked the Secretary.

"You say you've shelved the idea of an Office of Strategic Influence, but my sources say that you've shelved the idea of an Office of Strategic Influence, so why are you lying to us?"

Several members of the press corps were hospitalized later in the day for dehydration and mental exhaustion.

For further information, call Pentagon Press Services.

********** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **********

THE PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Pentagon press corps was the scene of a violent attack today as reporters turned on each other in a desperate hunt for what one reporter called a "mole in deep cover in our midst."

Convinced that the recent closing of the Pentagon's Office of Strategic Influence was itself a piece of strategic disinformation, several reporters began to suspect that one of their own was spreading rumors in an attempt to confuse and disorient them.

"This is classic psy-ops," said one. "First you get us to question what we know to be true, then you get us to turn on each other."

"Rumsfeld!" said another. "That g**d*mn man is evil!"

"You sound pretty convinced of that," said a third. "Almost too convinced. Like you have something to hide."

The second reporter then lunged for the third reporter's face, swinging his Blackberry two-way pager wildly. "Hide in plain sight! Hide in plain sight!" he shouted, as others tried to pry his fingers from his colleague's neck.

For further information, call Pentagon Press Services.

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HELP!!!!

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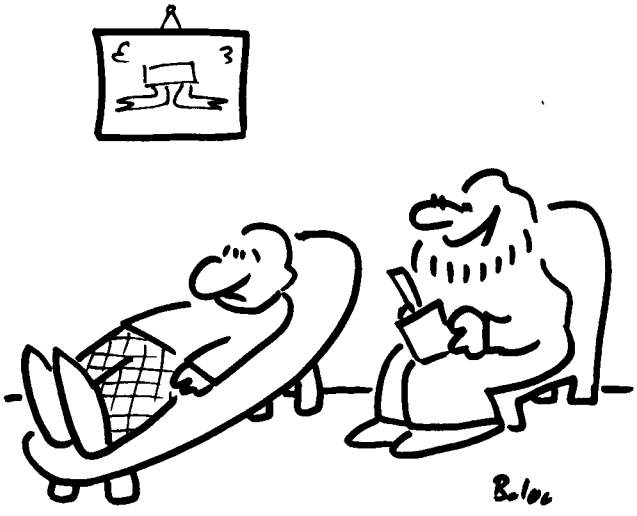
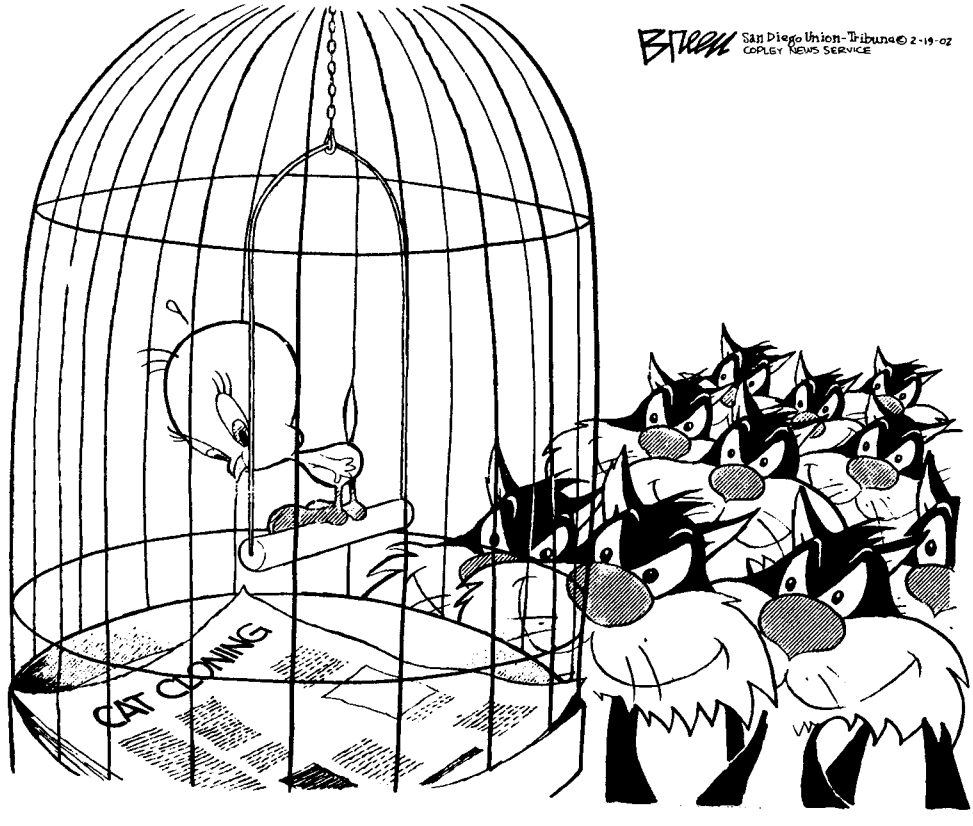


"True, but research has shown that psychobabble can actually be quite therapeutic."

Go, Liddy, Go

She'll stump in every county
And stomp on Erskine Bowles;
November, she'll be primping
In White House girandoles.
She's headquartered with mother
In Salisbury; so, please—
I'm staring at you, Mr. Dole—
No sex ads, you old tease.

—W. H. von Dreele



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Third Thoughts on Divorce

MAGGIE GALLAGHER

For Better or For Worse: Divorce Reconsidered, by E. Mavis Hetherington and John Kelly (Norton, 307 pp., $26.95)

E. MAVIS HETHERINGTON is one of the nation's most respected research psychologists. Her new book (with writer John Kelly) has been marketed as a rebuttal to divorce critics, who—she believes—have overestimated the negative effects of divorce and downplayed its benefits.

All the headlines have gone to Hetherington's bottom line: The majority of children of divorce, she reassures worried parents, are functioning in the normal range 20 years later: "Most were successfully going about the chief tasks of young adulthood: establishing careers, creating intimate relationships, building meaningful lives."

But E. Mavis Hetherington is too good a scholar to have 20 years of research summed up in sound bites. This book is a report for lay readers on three different—and important—long-running studies designed to assess the effects of divorce. The studies ultimately involved 1,400 families; in other words, when it comes to the case against the case against divorce, this is as good as it gets.

How good is that?

Adults, first. Men and women divorced for different reasons, says Hetherington. Women complained about lack of intimacy and affection; men complained about lack of sex and overly critical wives. Infidelity, abuse, and alcoholism were present, but in a minority of divorces.

The Marriage of Giovanni Arnolfini and Giovanna Cenami by Jan van Eyck

Adults choose to divorce, then, not mostly to escape from violent hellholes, but because they are lonely, bored, depressed, dissatisfied. How often does divorce deliver on its seductive promise of a better life? Hetherington's sample consists mostly of white, middle-class, and relatively well-educated men and women. Yet even among this advantaged group, the answer is: Surprisingly seldom.

Hetherington judges that 20 years after a divorce, only about 20 percent of divorced individuals (most of them women) were Enhancers, whose lives were improved by the divorce. Another 10 percent became what Hetherington calls Competent Loners—whether divorce improved their lives is not clear. For about 40 percent, divorce was a tumult that made no difference: "Different partners, different marriages, but usually the same problems." The remaining 30 percent were in various stages of just plain miserable: Hetherington uses words like "desperately unhappy," "empty, pointless," "clinically depressed," "joyless," and "embittered" to describe how they felt about their lives.

Casual sex had a particularly negative effect on divorced women, notes Hetherington. The seven suicides she observed were all women and all triggered (she tells us) by casual sex. Men got bored with casual sex, too, but it took them two years, on average. (The ennui of meaningless sex eventually drove many a man to remarriage, but never to suicide.)

How good, then, is divorce for adults? Hetherington's work is peppered with data that are far from reassuring. Sentences like this, for example: "Behaviors like Peeping Tomism and harassing birds are worrisome, but they are also fairly normal in the first year after a divorce, as are erratic mood swings, vulnerability to psychological disorders and physical illness, and doubts about the decision to leave." Those who have entered the wacky world where Peeping Toms and bird assaults are fairly normal will no doubt be relieved to know there is a light at the end of the tunnel; the rest of us may be forgiven for thinking that jumping down that particular black hole sounds even less fun than one imagined.

What about the divorced people who were better off in the long run—what made the difference for them? The answer, ironically, is marriage. Hetherington found that "people in long-lasting, gratifying first and second marriages were better off economically, and had the lowest rates of depression, substance abuse, conduct disorders, health complaints, and visits to the doctor"—along with a more satisfying sex life.

Hetherington's study thus confirms the research of others on the critical importance of a good-enough marriage

Maggie Gallagher is an affiliate scholar at the Institute for American Values, in New York.

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to adult well-being. But something about contemporary mores is seriously undermining the road to a good marriage. Only one-third of the grown children Hetherington studied (from intact and disrupted families) who were in the first seven years of marriage were very happily married, compared to over half of their parents at that stage; 38 percent reported facing a serious marital problem, compared to 20 percent of their parents at the same juncture. A good marriage is as important as it ever was, but apparently younger Americans are finding it harder and harder to achieve.

That's the upshot of Hetherington's study insofar as it concerns adults. But what about the kids? Should parents contemplating divorce relax?

On this issue, the results reported in *For Better or for Worse* are consistent with a large and growing social-science literature: Even among advantaged, middle-class white children, divorce doubles the risk that *20 years later* the grown children will experience serious social, emotional, and/or psychological dysfunction. "Twenty-five percent of youths from divorced families in comparison to 10 percent from non-divorced families did have serious social, emotional, or psychological problems." Money didn't matter: Even when family incomes were similar, children from disrupted homes had more long-term dysfunction.

Three-quarters of children of divorce do function normally; does that mean the glass is only one-quarter empty? It is important to recognize the limitations inherent in the definition of damage Hetherington uses. Many children who are functioning in the normal range psychologically may be suffering in other ways. A child who does not go to a good college because her parents divorced is functioning in the normal range, for example. The 35 percent of girls in remarried homes who started menstruating before age 12 (compared to 18 percent of girls from intact homes) are certainly functioning normally. The increased risk of premature sex, sexually transmitted diseases, and teen pregnancy in children of divorce is mentioned by Hetherington, but only in passing.

Children of divorce in this study also had roughly double the divorce rate of children from low-conflict intact families, and a higher divorce risk even than children raised in unhappy marriages. Why? A lower commitment to marital permanence and fewer relationship skills, says Hetherington. Seventy percent of children of divorce who married had relatively permissive views of divorce, compared to 40 percent of spouses from intact families. Their best chance of marital success was to marry a child from an intact family.

■

Divorce doubles the risk that grown children will experience serious dysfunction.

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One of the most consistent effects of divorce, even in white middle-class kids, was estrangement from the father. Very few of the highly educated and successful divorced men figured out how to be effective fathers outside of marriage. Twenty years later, about two-thirds of boys and three-quarters of girls had poor relationships with their fathers—compared to 30 percent of children from intact marriages.

The most poignant moment in the book is when Hetherington admits that "at the end of my study, a fair number of my adult children of divorce described themselves as permanently 'scarred.' But objective assessments of these 'victims' told a different story." What counts as damage has to be on Prof. Hetherington's checklist of dysfunctions defined by answers to multiple-choice questionnaires. The advantage, of course, is that these kinds of assessments are less likely to be influenced by the investigator's bias; but the equally obvious disadvantage is an enormous loss of sensitivity. When children of divorce try to tell Hetherington their own stories of more subtle, lingering emotional difficulties, she dismisses these as "self-fulfilling prophecy." If you have a job and a girlfriend, but you do not have your dad, does that count as damage? Not in Hetherington's book: You are functioning in the normal range, end of story.

Why would a top scholar such as Hetherington, whose own work recapitulates and confirms a growing consensus on the potential long-term negative effects of divorce, choose to minimize these effects in presenting her research to the public? Partly it is because she has a genuine admiration and respect for the personal growth divorce sometimes prompts, especially in women: Divorce winners do exist, most of them women who rise to meet and beat the considerable challenges divorce poses for mothers. Partly it is because Hetherington has defined down the damage caused by divorce, so that it includes only those consequences that can be categorized as social-science pathologies.

Certainly children of divorce need to know they are not damaged goods; human beings can rise above their circumstances. And certainly men and women who are already divorced need good advice on how to minimize the damage and maximize their opportuni-

LIKE A GIRL

Like a girl who knows that her body drives me to begging,
God taunts me, Flee if you can! But I can't flee,
For when I turn away from him, angry and heartsick,
With a vowel on my lips like a burning coal:
I will not see him again—

I can't do it.
And I turn back
And knock at his door,
Tortured with longing

As though he had sent me a love-letter.

—ROBERT MEZEY

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ties. But the potential danger stemming from Hetherington's well-meaning message of encouragement is what it may convey to parents: Go ahead and divorce, your kids will do fine.

For concerned parents contemplating divorce, the news that 20 years later one-fourth of kids are seriously dysfunctional surely cannot be treated as good news. In no other context would responsible parents say, "Gee, only a one out of four chance I will permanently damage my child? Go for it!"

But by framing the data in these terms, Hetherington raises an even deeper question: How much pain are parents entitled to inflict on their children, simply because their children may rise above it and avoid long-term psychological dysfunction? Like scholar Judith Wallerstein before her, Hetherington finds that even when divorce does not result in long-term damage, it is "usually brutally painful . . . To the boys and girls in my research divorce seemed cataclysmic and inexplicable. How could a child feel safe in a world where adults had suddenly become untrustworthy?"

One of Hetherington's success stories is a woman named Bethany. As an adult, she is doing extremely well, thanks to her mother's heroic parenting. I certainly do not blame her mother for choosing divorce—her husband's repeated infidelities were one proximate cause. And yet this is what divorce meant for Bethany: "The previously placid Bethany also would fly into rages, hitting and biting her mother, whom she blamed for the separation. In her distress, she began to wet the bed again, had night terrors, and would wake crying or crawl into bed with [her mother] three or four times a night. Bethany later said, 'I had to keep checking to see if Mom was there. If Dad could leave, why couldn't she?'"

The larger questions raised by these emotional realities of divorce are not, ultimately, scholarly ones. How and when can it be right for mothers and fathers to cause brutal pain to their children? If the human spirit is indeed resilient, can't enterprising adults perhaps find some other path to personal growth? How much are our ideas about the relative harmlessness of divorce undermining our ability to build the lasting love we crave? **NR**

Sons of Adamses

FORREST McDONALD

America's First Dynasty: The Adamses, 1735–1918, by Richard Brookhiser (Free Press, 244 pp., $25)

THE United States has been so democratic, and its society so fluid, that the very idea that the nation could spawn a dynasty seems positively un-American. In truth, families that have been rich or powerful for more than two generations have been rare. Moreover, as historian Bert Folsom has convincingly shown, vertical mobility has repeatedly been bidirectional, up and down: Families have gone from riches to rags quite as frequently as from rags to riches.

The major exception was the Adams family of Massachusetts: In the telling of NR senior editor Richard Brookhiser, they were America's first dynasty. The patriarch was John Adams, a principal architect of independence, minister to the Court of St. James's, first vice president, second president, and incidentally the author of serious works in history and political philosophy. Next came his son, John Quincy Adams, a person so precociously learned as to boggle the imagination, whose first diplomatic post came when he was in his twenties, who went on to have an eminently successful career as the leading American diplomat of his era, reaching a climax as secretary of state. In that position he negotiated important treaties with Britain and Spain and formulated the Monroe Doctrine. Then came his less-than-successful term as president. (Brookhiser wryly points out that, though efforts have been made during the last few decades to rehabilitate John Adams's presidency, efforts to salvage J.Q.'s have been negligible "because the task is so obviously impossible.") But J.Q. had a significant career after he left the presidency, serving 17 years in the House of Representatives, where he was an outspoken enemy of slaveholders and their congressmen.

Mr. McDonald is professor of history at the University of Alabama and author, most recently, of *States' Rights and the Union, 1776–1876*.

The next two generations never held such exalted positions, but they were major figures nonetheless. The most significant public service of Charles Francis Adams, J.Q.'s son, was as American minister to London during the Civil War, in which capacity he was instrumental in persuading the British government not to grant formal recognition to the Confederacy. Had it done that, Britain and France would likely have offered to arbitrate the conflict, and that in turn would almost certainly have ensured the independence of the South. Charles Francis was thus a key figure in preserving the nation his grandfather had helped bring into existence. Charles Francis's third son, Henry Adams, would among other things become one of the greatest historians the United States has ever produced; his nine-volume *History of the United States during the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison* is still regarded as a classic.

These four Adamses, it should be pointed out, were not entirely characteristic of the family line. Along the way, among the various brothers and offspring, were a number of no-goodniks and a surprising number of alcoholics. Perhaps that last is not so surprising, for even John Quincy partook deeply of the sauce: As an old man he correctly identified 11 of 14 Madeiras in a blind taste test. There may have been a propensity for alcoholism in the genetic pool; or, as Charles Francis put it, "vices are hereditary in families." For all that, Brookhiser is on solid ground in regarding the foursome as a dynasty.

In treating them as such, the author took on a formidable task. Not the least challenging part was the depth and breadth of understanding of American history that it entailed. The Adamses, even Henry, were at or near the centers of power in every major facet of American development from the Revolution until World War I, and to comprehend the men it is necessary to know the story well enough to be able to sketch in the

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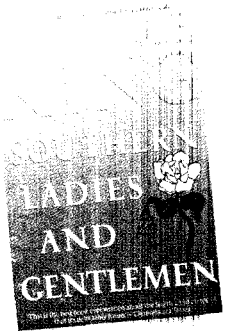

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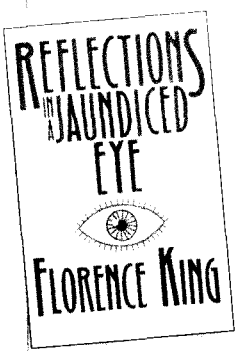

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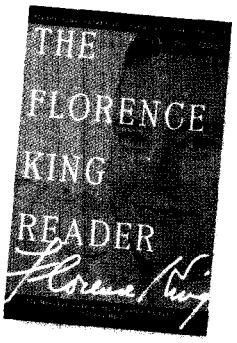
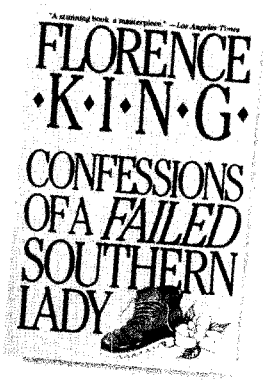
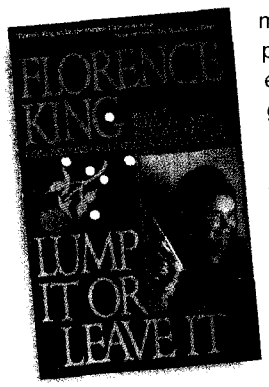


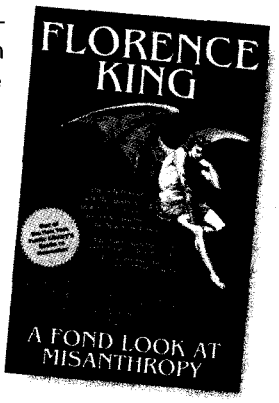
Confessions of a Failed Southern Lady The unrivaled account of growing up in an eccentric Southern family (read it and you'll know why Little Florence would have been beloved by even W. C. Fields). Hailed as one of the best memoirs ever written, and rightly so; this true tale of Granny's gone-awry attempt to raise Florence as a Perfect Southern Lady overflows with wit, gusto, bawdiness, and flat-out unsurpassed writing. This peek into the rearing of America's reigning misanthrope is a must for any King fan, and anyone who enjoys an uproarious read. "A stunning book, a masterpiece."—*Los Angeles Times* **$12.95/quality paperback.**



Lump It or Leave It King gives no quarter in these acid-laced reflections on American tomfoolery. From the joys of menopause to the hazards of fame, from college professors ("incapable of earning a living with either their minds or their hands") and the U.S. government ("the crude leading the crud") to that favorite of subjects, the South ("if at first you don't secede, try, try, again"), there are few blockheads or brainless trends left standing after Miss Anthrope has her way with them. "The scent of sulphur and brimstone wafts off the page. . . . venom on a par with Dorothy Parker's literary bite."—*Chicago Sun-Times* **$10.95/quality paperback.**



With Charity Toward None: A Fond Look at Misanthropy America's unreconstructed people-hater gleefully separates the weak from the chafing in this masterpiece on *la vie misanthrope* ranging from Timon of Athens to Ty Cobb. Zip open the body bags of King's victims and you'll find faux misanthropes (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Andy Rooney), closet misanthropes (Richard Nixon), and a slew of humanitarian rabble. "The only trouble with this book is that its covers are too close together."—*New York Times* **$10.95/quality paperback.**



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big picture without losing sight of the individual subjects. The difficulty was compounded by Brookhiser's decision to do what he did in the compass of a short book, not much more than 200 pages of text. Having lived for half a century in the company of professional historians, I can honestly say that I have known only a handful who know enough to have done what Brookhiser has done, and scarcely any who would have done it with such wit and charm.

Another difficulty Brookhiser faced is that these people, though admirable, were far from likeable. They were brilliant, well-educated, honorable public servants. They were also vain, self-righteous, envious, hypocritical, irascible, cantankerous snobs and whiners. Benjamin Franklin, in an often quoted passage, said of John Adams that he was "always an honest man, often a wise one, but sometimes, and in some things, absolutely out of his senses." Similar comments could be and were made about the others.

■

Brookhiser gives us solid history, with wit and charm.

■

Compensating for their unloveliness, the Adamses were prolific letter writers and diarists, and these documents furnish plenty of spice that Brookhiser samples with glee. Charles Francis edited and published ten volumes of his grandfather's writings and twelve volumes of John Quincy's diaries (about half the total). Brookhiser comments that J.Q.'s "diary is a masterpiece, a lode of glittering observations and judgments, all of them intelligent, some even fair-minded." Charles Francis himself never missed a day of recording in his diary from 1826 to 1880, though late in life he burned it all, as did Henry with his diaries.

Brookhiser quotes extensively from those of John and John Quincy, providing his readers with colorful comments about their contemporaries as well as, inferentially, about the Adamses themselves. In the First Continental Congress in 1774, John observed that Caesar Rodney of Delaware was "the oddest looking man in the world . . . his face is not bigger than a large apple." He thought James Duane of New York "sly" and "squint-eyed." William Livingston of New Jersey had "nothing elegant or genteel about him"; John Rutledge of South Carolina had "nothing of the profound, sagacious, brilliant, or sparkling" about him. "We have not men fit for the times," John wrote early on, but after a week he decided that "there is in the Congress a collection of the greatest men upon this continent in point of abilities, virtues, and fortunes. The magnanimity and public spirit which I see here make me blush for the sordid, venal herd which I have seen in my own Province."

John Quincy wrote of Jefferson that he had "a memory so pandering to the will that in deceiving others he seems to have begun by deceiving himself." Charles Francis described William H. Seward, Lincoln's secretary of state, as "a wiry old scarecrow" who "dressed in a coat and trousers made apparently twenty years ago and by a bad tailor at that." Henry wrote that the "progress of evolution, from President Washington to President Grant, was alone evidence enough to upset Darwin." Of Theodore Roosevelt, he wrote after a White House dinner party that he was annoyed by the young president's "infantile superficiality with his boyish dogmatism of assertion. . . . We are a boys' school run wild."

Historians tend to pick up the writing styles of their sources, and Brookhiser has delightfully penned Adams-like barbs of his own or found them elsewhere. Of the elsewhere variety, he recounts a "probably apocryphal" story that John C. Calhoun (whom J. Q. Adams regarded as the only public man whose intellect he "rated as highly as his own") once attempted to write a poem, beginning "Whereas . . ." And Brookhiser describes John Adams's discursive and rambling literary style and remarks that "if John were a child in a modern-day school, he would probably be diagnosed with attention deficit disorder."

In sum, Brookhiser has done it again: As in his books on Washington and Hamilton, he has given us a work that is a joy to read and solid history into the bargain. **NR**

Steinbeck Reconsidered

TRACY LEE SIMMONS

America and Americans, and Selected Nonfiction, by John Steinbeck, edited by Susan Shillinglaw and Jackson J. Benson (Viking, 400 pp., $27.95)

JOHN STEINBECK might have been the last writer of a generation for whom being an American seemed in itself a special thing—and being an American writer an extraordinary thing. Having lit out in the world just after the "Lost Generation," he later wrote that his ragged group should have been called "the Unfortunate Generation because we didn't have a Generation, nor the sense to invent one." They were destined to be bent more by the want of the Thirties than by the bounty of the Twenties. But in return Steinbeck felt the liberty to plow fresh ground well away from the Left Bank in Paris. Through weighty novels like *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *Cannery Row*, he diagnosed and fleshed out our peculiar strengths and manifold weaknesses with characters presumably still familiar to us, if only via the movies. These books eventually won him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962. This gritty Californian had a steady and unerring sense of place, accompanied by an expansiveness that enabled him to take a shot at answering the famous question posed in the 18th century by St. John de Crèvecoeur, "What then is the American, this new man?"

The novels stand on their own. But the 100th anniversary of Steinbeck's birth this year is also being duly marked by the publication of this book, a sizable helping of his nonfiction—for Steinbeck was an avid journalist, a hat he didn't

Mr. Simmons, director of the Dow journalism program at Hillsdale College, is the author, most recently, of the forthcoming *Climbing Parnassus: A New Apologia for Greek and Latin*.

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remove even after the novelist's riches and acclaim had come his way. Fiction was too small a medium for a man whose bag of commentary bulged. He knew famous people and saw famous wars. He traveled much, both at home and abroad, and he came to know New York as well as he did Salinas and Monterey. Steinbeck had much to say. And by 1968, when he died, he had said very much indeed, and some of it is worth hearing again.

Some of it isn't. Whenever Steinbeck went political, which was often, he wasn't so much wrong as simplistic. His reflexive and dyed-in-the-jeans—if not always strident—leftism makes many of his opinions wearisomely predictable after five or six decades. He was keen to make sure his readers knew that he was the super-proletarian, and he had a way of cottoning to the safe, approved side of every issue, from capitalist exploitation of migrant workers to the theatrics of Joseph McCarthy. He could be a sentimental alarmist. And a few sentences he wrote—"I believe in and will fight for the right of the individual to function as an individual without pressure from any direction"—sound like crosses between naïve political manifestoes and bad college writing. That none of this drives one to throw the book aside, especially coming as so much of it does in the first half of this volume, is remarkable. Substance and insight usually won out, and he not infrequently rose to eloquence. What Steinbeck lacked as a theorist he made up for as an artist.

This collection takes its title from Steinbeck's last important and too-little-known book from the mid Sixties, *America and Americans*, a collection of essays on the American character commissioned by Viking and originally accompanied by photographs of American scenes. That small part of this volume, which might easily have been published compactly on its own—I wish it had been—comes to us now without the photographs. But we don't need them; the book stands alone as much as Steinbeck's novels do. If it's not an altogether triumphant work of analysis, it contains enough premonitory hunches about our national life to give us pause. Ours isn't the first generation to see the cultural risks attending the American cornucopia; each success, political or economic, creates another problem. Conservatives and liberals alike sing this tune now. "It should raise some smoke," Steinbeck wrote in a letter when he was finishing his corrections on the book. "There's an argument in every sentence, or at least there will be if anyone reads it."

■

Fiction was too small a medium for a man whose bag of commentary bulged.

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Anyone who does read it will find Steinbeck the Social Critic. The quest of the Oklahoma refugees for salvation—physical and spiritual—from the searing deprivations of the Dust Bowl, so faithfully and painfully dramatized in *The Grapes of Wrath*, was already a distant memory when Steinbeck composed *America and Americans*. He wrote for and about a different country. The knot of our troubles had turned inside out. Abundance, not want, threatened us. Steinbeck could write with the dispassion of a percipient foreigner. He notes, for example, that many view Americans as "a restless, a dissatisfied, a searching people. We bridle and buck under failure, and we go mad with dissatisfaction in the face of success. We spend our time searching for security, and hate it when we get it." This is boilerplate: It's true enough, but it can describe other nations just as well. But then Steinbeck gets discomfitingly contemporary:

> For the most part we are an intemperate people; we eat too much when we can, drink too much, indulge our senses too much. Even in our so-called virtues we are intemperate: a teetotaler is not content not to drink—he must stop all the drinking in the world; a vegetarian among us would outlaw the eating of meat. We work too hard, and many die under the strain; and then to make up for that we play with a violence [just] as suicidal.

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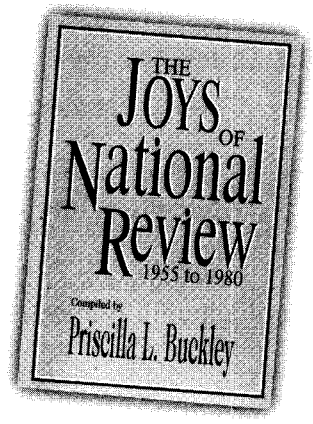

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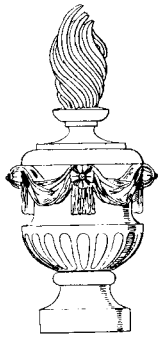
seem to corroborate this view. We are a people, Steinbeck held, of the "paradox and dream." "We speak of the American Way of Life," he wrote, "as though it involved the ground rules for the governance of heaven." We have an ugly puritanical streak, as H. L. Mencken recognized years before when he defined the puritan as someone beset with a haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy. Steinbeck thought it a rotten trait; rarely is it even honest. For in so many ways we seem at times to be "a nation of public puritans and private profligates." The puritan, in other words, has a cupboard with stash. Were its contents ever to be revealed, his very sense of self would be blasted away. Nor are we always markedly sensible in the way we choose to rule ourselves. We "demand second-rate candidates and first-rate Presidents." And that's little wonder, he says, because in America the "President must be greater than anyone else, but not better than anyone else," a hard deal to negotiate.



■

Steinbeck eerily saw the coming long-term effects of Dr. Spock and the armies of self-esteemers.

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Our irrationality is best seen in our hopes for the future, and nowhere does the future press more obviously upon us than through our children. Ever more do we define ourselves by them instead of by our own achievements; for many, children *are* their achievements. Steinbeck smelled trouble here and called this nascent national sickness "paedosis." Its symptoms were spreading. The war generation, to which Steinbeck belonged as an older member, had wanted their children to be better off than themselves, indeed better than themselves on all fronts. This was an admirable, even loving, aim. Yet their method for making this happen was "based not on their experience but on their wishes and hopes," which isn't the way that wisdom usually works. Their method wasn't prudent. Steinbeck eerily saw the coming long-term effects of Dr. Spock and the armies of self-esteemers:

> Laziness, sloppiness, indiscipline, selfishness, and general piggery, which are the natural talents of children and were once slapped out of them . . . now [have become] either crimes of the parents or sickness in the children, who would far rather be sick than disciplined.

If we buy this picture and then remind ourselves that this passage was written in the mid Sixties, many of the accumulated if quiet social ills of the Seventies, Eighties, and Nineties might begin to be explained. Child-worship, if left unchecked, will kill the objects of veneration. None of this, Steinbeck assured us, is a "diatribe": It's "an exact description of what has been happening to Americans, and it doesn't work in that it does not create adults." Indeed, "the American approach to the young has extended adolescence far into the future, so that very many Americans have never and can never become adults." Not a big problem perhaps, unless a social order requires a few grownups. The children he spoke of have long since become parents themselves. "Paedosis," if it exists, now runs in the groundwater.

Much of what he wrote almost 40 years ago was prescient, even where it will strike many as too pessimistic. But John Steinbeck, in laying his charges, at least gave us the credit of maturity. He understood that the dreams survive, and that they should. They propel us along the most uncertain of roads. They keep us buoyant. They drive us on to the last inning. They mark "our vague yearnings toward what we wish we were and hope we may be: wise, just, compassionate, and noble." He was thoroughly American—certainly American enough to criticize wisely and well. He was grateful to a great country and a great people, both of which he believed in fervently. For we are, as a nation, "complicated, paradoxical, bullheaded, shy, cruel, boisterous, unspeakably dear, and very beautiful." **NR**

Sunday School for Atheists

ANDREW STUTTAFORD

The Golden Compass (351 pp.), *The Subtle Knife* (288 pp.), and *The Amber Spyglass* (480 pp.), by Philip Pullman (Del Rey, $6.99 each)

It was, some said, the moment that literature for the young finally came of age. On January 22, Philip Pullman, a children's writer (although he objects to that label), was awarded Britain's prestigious Whitbread prize for the final installment of his best-selling *His Dark Materials* trilogy. In the opinion of the judges, *The Amber Spyglass* was Britain's book of the year. It was an unprecedented honor for a work aimed at younger readers, but Pullman is a man who must be getting used to praise, and not just in Britain. His writing has been described as "very grand indeed" in the *New York Times*, while reviews in the *Washington Post* have included adoring references to the "moral complexity" and "extravagant . . . wonders" to be found in Pullman's work.

There can, indeed, be little doubt that the first book in the trilogy, *The Golden Compass*, is a masterpiece, a sparkling addition to the canon of great children's fiction that leaves poor Harry Potter helplessly stranded in the comparative banality of his Platform 9¾. Within the time it takes to read his first few, skillfully drawn pages, Pullman takes us into a beguiling parallel universe. His spikily endearing heroine, 11-year-old Lyra, lives in an England that is a curious blend of the Edwardian and the modern. It is a place where the boundaries between what we would think of as the natural and the supernatural are blurred, no more distinct than the fraying edges of the alternate realities that

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Pullman describes so well. In Lyra's world every person has a demon: a companion in animal form, part soul, part familiar spirit. There are witches in Lapland, and the most feared warriors in the North are a rampaging race of armor-clad bears, ursine Klingons who have fallen into decadence under the rule of a corrupt and vicious usurper.

In constructing this captivating, fascinating fantasy, Pullman has pillaged the past and looted from legend. He is a magpie of myth, an author whose work borrows from saga, folklore, and some delightfully obscure parts of the historical record, and, oh yes, he can write.

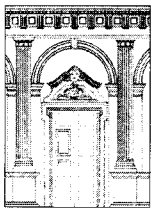
> Lyra raised her eyes and had to wipe them with the inside of her wrist, for she was so cold that tears were blurring them. When she could see clearly, she gasped at the sight of the sky. The Aurora had faded to a pallid trembling glimmer, but the stars were as bright as diamonds, and across the great dark diamond-scattered vault, hundreds upon hundreds of tiny black shapes were flying out of the east and south toward the north.
>
> "Are they birds?" she said.
>
> "They are witches," said the bear.

That literature of this, well, literacy is being written for the young (Pullman's target audience begins at around 11, Lyra's age) is wonderful. And finding a large market for it in this grunting, ineloquent era is little short of a miracle. More than a million copies of Pullman's books have been sold in the U.S., and the same again in his native Britain.

Their author, however, would be a little uneasy to hear the use of that word "miracle." For he is, alas, a man with a message, and by the end of the trilogy the message has drowned out the magic. Narrative thrust is abandoned in favor of a hectoring, pontificating preachiness—which has itself probably played no small part in the rise of Pullmania among the chattering classes on both sides of the Atlantic.

Pullman, you see, is a man with an apse to grind. He hates the Church, and he hates it with a passion. This is an unusual fixation for someone from the scepter'd isle; most of the English are rather relaxed about religion, tending to lack strong views about the matter one way or the other. Our predominant faith is a benign, "play nice" agnosticism, vaguely rooted in the Anglican tradition. Metaphysical debate is as foreign to us English people as a sunny day in November.

Philip Pullman is made of more strident stuff. He wants, he once told the *Washington Post*, "to undermine the basis of Christian belief." This is an immodest ambition even for a winner of the Whitbread prize, and the rationale behind it seems crude, no more sophisticated than that of the high-school heretic, and gratingly simplistic from such a clever writer. The history of the Christian Church is, Pullman intones, a "record of terrible infamy and cruelty and persecution and tyranny." True, to an extent; but the full story is a little more complex than that. It is no surprise to discover that C. S. Lewis is a particular bogeyman: Pullman claims to hate the Narnia books "with deep and bitter passion." Among other offenses, Lewis apparently celebrated "racism [and] misogyny"—a choice of thought crimes that reveals the supposedly skeptical Mr. Pullman as a loyal follower of a very orthodox form of political correctness (the inquisitorial piety of our own time). P.C.'s dismal spoor can be found throughout his books, a spot of class hatred here, a little global warming there.



And, above all, there is his omnipresent attitudinizing vis-à-vis religion. It's not so much the role of a wicked Church that is the problem (malevolent clergymen with twisted creeds are nothing new in fiction), but the tiresome little lectures that come with it. So, for example, in *The Subtle Knife* a speech attacking the sinister Church of Lyra's world becomes an attack on all churches everywhere: "Every church is the same: control, destroy, obliterate every good feeling." There is plenty more of the same, crude, nagging, and bombastic, its form objectionable, whatever one might think of the content. In writing his tales of Narnia, C. S. Lewis may also have been a man on a mission, but at least he had enough respect for his readers to prefer allegory and parable to assertion and

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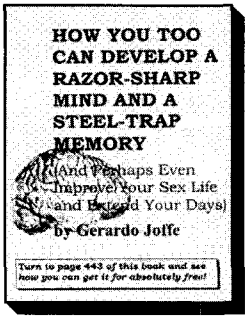
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propaganda. It is worth remembering that, compared with Pullman, Lewis was writing for a much younger audience, children of an age at which it is quite possible to read and reread the Narnia adventures and miss most or even all of the Christian references; aged eight or nine, I did. Nevertheless, Lewis was content to leave his message oblique; Pullman never allows his readers such freedom.

■

The object of Lyra's quest is an unholy grail that simply does not engage the imagination.

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Despite these concerns, the second book, *The Subtle Knife*, remains imaginative and alluring, less startlingly original than its predecessor, but still able to survive increasing amounts of its author's pedestrian philosophizing. By the end of *The Subtle Knife*, however, it is becoming painfully apparent that Pullman's overall theme (basically, a variation on *Paradise Lost*) is unlikely ever to soar: a devastating weakness in a work that, like many epics, is structured as a quest. *The Amber Spyglass*, the allegedly grand finale of the series, is intended to bring resolution, but it is difficult to care. The object of Lyra's quest remains (at best) obscure and (at worst) highly pretentious, an unholy grail that simply does not engage the imagination.

When I asked 11-year-old Holly, the daughter of some friends, what she thought of these books, she said that they were "well-written." The story itself didn't quite catch her attention.

Dust is to blame: *The Amber Spyglass* is a book in which, despite some sporadically spectacular passages, any real sense of excitement is, quite literally, ground into Dust. Scattered over page after wearying page, this endlessly discussed "Dust" is the substance that represents consciousness in Pullman's universe, but it runs the risk of inducing unconsciousness in his youthful and, doubtless, exhausted readership.

And there is, unfortunately, no escaping it. For there is Dust to be found in every nook and cranny of this wordy, wordy, wordy culmination of Pullman's three-volume morality play, which is, at its core, nothing less than an assault on the notion of Original Sin. In the end, the assault takes very literal form: After a battle that rather uneasily combines elements of *Star Wars* with the Book of Revelation, God (or, at least, an entity who is clearly meant to be the Christian God) is overthrown, the underworld is liberated, and a "Republic of Heaven" is proclaimed.

The true nature of this apparently marvelous republic is never made clear. It may be the materialist heaven on earth, but there are also hints that it could be the New Age's goblin-infested alternative, that empty-headed, shallowly superstitious zone where everything, and nothing, is sacred. It makes for a somewhat frustrating conclusion to this very frustrating trilogy, a flawed, fascinating creation of great promise that is eventually brought down by its tendency to go too far—much like naughty old Adam himself, as Philip Pullman would never say. **NR**

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■ CITY DESK ■

On the Avenue

RICHARD BROOKHISER

On Madison Avenue there is a store called Worldly Things. That name shall be the text for this day, and Madison Avenue the setting.

There was a time, not long ago, when Fifth Avenue in Midtown was New York's mart and display case for high-quality things of this world. That stretch of Fifth Avenue is still impressive, with wide and noble sidewalks, St. Patrick's Cathedral and Rockefeller Center, the Tiffany diamond and the University Club. But there has recently been an unmistakable invasion of cheesiness. Stores for teenagers, franchise outlets for sport and entertainment products, the monstrous snowflake that hangs over 57th Street at Christmastime—it all has a whiff of the mall, or Los Angeles. The concentrated high-end shopping experience, without distractions, is now north and east, on Madison Avenue.

The Upper East Side, through which Madison Avenue passes, is the last nest in New York of prosperous WASPs and those who aspire to be like them, and toward the upper end of the Madison Avenue shopping district stands an homage to WASPs and their things, the Ralph Lauren store. Like all but the best tributes, it has the excess of passion. Lauren took a 19th-century limestone mansion in the style of the French Renaissance, frosted with battlements and doodads, and furnished it with absurdly detailed props: editions of Dickens, bowler hats on pegs, saddles, paintings of fox hunts. It is a stage set for shopping. No club was ever so clubby, no country house so horsey. Real clubs and country houses have patches of shabbiness—the shiny sofa cushion, the lamp with a frayed cord, the ugly dust catcher that some member donated or that Grandmother bought. But at Ralph Lauren's store love demands perfection. His affection for his dream world recalls

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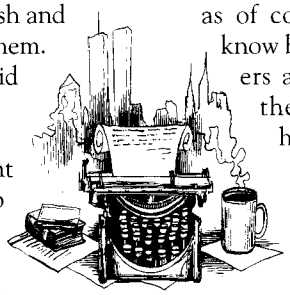
Simon Rosedale, the bustling nouveau riche in Edith Wharton's *House of Mirth*, whose appreciation Lily Bart repels early in the book. But one of Wharton's points, as her mirthless book progresses, is that all the actual WASPs let Lily down or stab her in the back; only Rosedale remains true after his fashion to the bitter end. When Ralph Lauren goes, will WASPs have any fans left?

Ralph Lauren is the Russell Kirk of high fashion; above and below him on Madison Avenue are the modernists, the Japanese and the Italians. Issey Miyake has a store in the high 70s displaying his contraptions: feathery boas, dresses like accordion bellows made of crepe paper, the same dresses put through a shredder. Everything is cut for tiny tiny Japanese bodies, though some items would seem not to fit even them, as clothing floats away from human beings. Thousands of years from now the computer programs we will have become may display, at their portals, blouses or trousers out of nostalgia for their hominid past. The Japanese will get there first.

To the south are the Italians—Etro, Prada, Krizia. Giorgio Armani is suffering from Guggenheim shock. The spiral museum recently held a show of his clothes, which seems to have gone to his head. So has his sexuality. He once designed for slightly hip businessmen; now too many of his selections look as if they were designed for dimwitted 18-year-olds. The polymorphous perversity of the late Gianni Versace, by contrast, never interfered with his design sense. He found his notes, flash and classicism, and stayed with them. If he courted vulgarity, so did the Caesars. His murder in South Beach by an aging homosexual party boy brought the closure of melodrama to his life, but his line marches exuberantly on.



What else does the avenue have, and not have, that helps maintain its character? The only real blemish is the Whitney Museum: The pianist Dick Wellstood helpfully suggested that it be torn down and replaced by brownstones. The sidewalks are narrow, but the buildings are relatively short, so everything is well proportioned. There are very few restaurants, and they are expensive or grim; this is appropriate, for the sense of Madison Avenue is sight, not taste. There are boutiques, art galleries, and a little store with big diamonds. There is a good book store, Madison Avenue Bookshop; another good one, Books & Company, lost its lease and is much mourned, though it was biased toward academic subjects. There you found the correspondence of Leo Strauss and Carl Schmitt, but they seemed out of place. What would Socrates and Himmler do on Madison Avenue?

What does an ordinary American do there? A place like Madison Avenue rests uneasily in this country, for though our history has been a two-century-long boom interrupted by temporary contractions, our wealth pulls against older mindsets. The stern Puritan and the plain Quaker came here to found the new Jerusalem, not to shop. Classical republicanism was equally suspicious of luxury. At the Constitutional Convention George Mason argued that the federal government should have the power to pass sumptuary laws, to ward off decadence. Finally, there is the agrarian tradition, most nobly represented by the Virginia gentleman. President Jefferson received visitors to his White House in slippers and dirty corduroy breeches. The only man in Washington who was plainer was his cousin and enemy, Chief Justice John Marshall. One reason the two men hated each other so, besides ideology, was that they were competing in the simplicity Olympics.

The effect of such deep-seated prejudices is that when Americans consume, as of course they will, they don't know how. Cheesiness, from sneakers as ordinary footwear to cathedral ceilings in suburban homes, is the result. It would be more sensible, and it would certainly make the world more sightly, not to moralize things, only our attitude toward them. If an object is not inherently evil—and it is hard to think of anything, apart from an iron maiden or a life-size sex doll, that is—then shouldn't it be beautiful and well made, while we bear the responsibility for not being in bondage to it? If you conclude that the answer is yes, the avenue of worldly things awaits your visit. **NR**

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■ SHELF LIFE ■

JAMES V. SCHALL, a Jesuit priest and professor of government at Georgetown, is one of the most valuable participants in the public life of our nation's capital; against the political obsessiveness of his neighbors, he proposes a more reasonable understanding of what life is about. His exceptional learning—as well as lightness of heart—is on display in his new book, *On the Unseriousness of Human Affairs: Teaching, Writing, Playing, Believing, Lecturing, Philosophizing, Singing, Dancing* (ISI, 189 pp., $24.95). He meditates on the Latin phrase *Ludere est contemplari* ("to play is to contemplate"), which connects two essential aspects of a happy life. Play and contemplation have in common the fact that they are not utilitarian; watching a Redskins game, and prayerfully reflecting on eternal truth, are similar actions in that each is done joyfully, purely for its own sake.

Schall also has a healthy contempt for the pretensions of the intellect. He cites Hilaire Belloc as his guru on the question, and summarizes Belloc's thought as follows:

> A man with a steady and balanced mind, with a clear gaze, only has three things to remember to keep him sane. These are: (1) "After all it is not my business"; (2) "Tut! Tut! You don't say so!"; and (3) "Credo in unum Deum . . ." All the analytical powers of the pedants and the professors are but "dustheaps" by comparison.

If one keeps in mind Belloc's three rules, one may read the op-ed pages—and even watch political talk shows—without fearing the forces of darkness: To the pure, all things are pure.

Schall is a good-natured companion to the wisdom of Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas—and Denver Broncos linebacker Bill Romanowski, whom he quotes as follows: "If you love what you do, you don't have to work a day in your life." The linebacker speaks with the voice of the perennial philosophy—which looks beyond articulation, to the truth in things themselves.

■ There are plenty of laughs in Jack Stevens's comic political novel *Spark's Tract* (Xlibris, 351 pp., $22.99). Stevens was a right-wing activist in Washington, D.C., in the 1980s and 1990s, and learned a contempt for environmentalist kooks and grasping politicos—who are now objects of his satire. The plot has to do with a likeable hero and his friends standing up to bureaucrats, but the real joys of this book are the comic vignettes. Here, for example, is an exhortation at an environmentalist religious service:

> "Let us feel the pain of the tree as the chainsaw rips through its belly. Let us see the tree as more than condominiums, toilet paper, and board feet to be exported to Japan. Let us see instead billions of years of cellular memory and an entity of intrinsic value. Let us be like native peoples, who saw trees as wise spiritual beings, not just wood for their canoes, homes, and medicine objects. Let us know the tree, be like the tree, *become* the tree."

And here's a politician who has just finished reading out his talking points to a Senate committee:

> In the general confusion, he failed to notice that he had read through all nine of his notecards. When [he] came to the final line on the last card, entered in italics by his staff as a cue, he stopped, and wrinkled his brow. He was perplexed.
>
> "Gesture dramatically!" he announced suddenly and effusively.

Spark's Tract is itself a tract, a breathless condemnation of the depredations of overweening government in Stevens's native California. But the concerns he voices are serious ones, and his book is great libertarian fun.

■ "Amidst the adversity of our best friends, we always find something which does not displease us." "We all have strength enough to endure the pains of others." "Hypocrisy is an homage that vice pays to virtue." These aphorisms are by now familiar to millions who have never heard of their author, the 17th-century French courtier François de La Rochefoucauld. The most pointed of his comments induce in the reader a wicked frisson, a sense that one has been made privy to the deepest secrets locked away in the hearts of one's neighbors.

A new translation of La Rochefoucauld's *Maxims* (St. Augustine's Press, 152 pp., $19), by Stuart D. Warner and Stéphane Douard, gives us an opportunity to reconsider these famous distillations of insight into the human character. The first observation to make about La Rochefoucauld is that—at least in his most famous maxims—he is generally correct in what he asserts, but wrong in what he denies. (This, by the way, is a syndrome that tends to afflict extremely bright people. One famous example is Ayn Rand: She had an excellent understanding of economics, but went off the rails when she built a system that denied any truths that came from sources other than economics.) Consider the first maxim quoted above. It's incontrovertibly true that we human beings have a tendency to revel in the misfortunes of others, and find special satisfactions in those that befall our friends; but by adding the word "always," La Rochefoucauld turns his maxim into a denial, one that is false. With that "always," he is asserting that *no* human being has *ever* felt unalloyed displeasure at the misfortune of his friends; and even the most cynical person, if he's honest with himself, will admit that that isn't true.

But this observation applies only to the most famous maxims, the ones that have given La Rochefoucauld his reputation. One of the benefits of a book that provides all of the man's maxims is that we can see a more generous person, one motivated as much by compassion as by the desire to be witty and pointed. "One forgives as long as one loves." "A man who likes no one is much more unhappy than he whom no one likes." These maxims, joined to the others, give us a man in full, very much worth reading.

—MICHAEL POTEMRA

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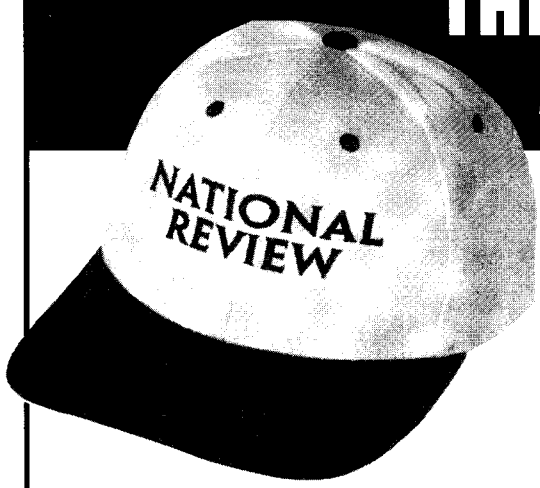

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Forrest Gump Abroad?

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 19

RECEIVING the news, while traveling abroad, of George W.'s deportment is scandalously exhilarating. The abasements of his predecessor, in his contacts overseas, are simply gone. Mr. Clinton was so steeply mired in ambivalence, it became hard for him to say anything endearing about the United States, except to the extent that he identified the United States with its 42nd president, himself. A trip through Africa guaranteed that Mr. Clinton would spend time deploring all the terrible things the United States did to Africa in centuries gone by, often recited to assemblies whose reveries are for life in America, in exchange for the lives most Africans have endured since the blight of decolonization.

When Mr. Bush announced that the war in Afghanistan was not over, inasmuch as the enemy did, not by any means all of it, reside in Afghanistan, a cosmopolitan prince in this part of the world (Switzerland) observed that the American president needs to "prove" that there is more to do in such places as Iraq before he can reasonably proceed on the assumption that Europe will endorse his activity. George Bush's way of handling problems like this is to say he is surprised that Europeans spend what would seem inordinate time worrying about U.S. forces tracking down terrorists, rather than about terrorists being tracked down by U.S. forces.

What is observable, in conversation with Europeans and others, and in some of their press, is the evanescence of their indignation. Usually they get mad, we apologize, they get madder because we didn't apologize sufficiently, then U.S. engines of criticism get mad because the U.S. got into such a mess. It was so when we bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade. The more we apologized, the madder the Chinese Reds got. When last year a Chinese fighter jet diddled with one of our patrol planes and crashed into the sea, and our wounded aircraft landed in Chinese territory, there was the expected caterwaul from Peking. Mr. Bush's statement struck some as a bit too craven, given that our people were patrolling the skies in freedom-of-the-seas exercises, while the Chinese interloper was aggressive and suicidal. But we got our pilots and plane back, and Mr. Bush seems to have learned from his near brush with diplomatic servility.

Has *that* changed! He is breathing the same air that Ronald Reagan breathed when he gave attention to the Evil Empire. One wishes one had been there in a White House closet when Reagan scratched those words into the speech and handed it up to the chain of detoxifiers, getting back an etiolated version, into which he calmly, but decisively, reinserted the Evil Empire phrase, whereafter it sounded out and lives happily forever in the airwaves of hygienic diplomatic thought.

Now President Bush has gone to Asia and there is no trace, no trace *whatever*, of any wish to modify the charge in his State of the Union address that something he calls the axis of evil binds Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. The dumb leader of North Korea is struck dumber still by the focus Mr. Bush has given to the regime Kim inherited from his evil father. What they have in North Korea is starvation and isolation and terror and the makings of an atom bomb. That Mr. Bush should be reticent about drawing attention to the septic fruit of 50 years of the Kim rulers is something that, well, kind of goes against the grain of W.

And he goes to Japan with headlines like, "Bush Urges Japan / To Spur Economy." That kind of thing is thought to be the equivalent of telling the queen to watch her grammar. But of course it isn't so. What is so is that the failure of Japan, Inc., over the past ten years has immobilized Japan, and demoralized trading partners in Asia for whom the growth and ability of the Japanese economy have been a great bulwark against lost confidence in the free market approach to social order.

"And then, one morning I got up on the wrong side of history."

So what will the president say, by way of counseling Prime Minister Koizumi? A mandarin nicety might be for the president to spend 20 minutes on what was done wrong by Enron, applying the lessons to Japan: hoked-up relations with banks, carrying bad credit to inordinate lengths, declining to privatize sick federal industries.

Mr. Bush knows the basic postulates of successful free systems. You reward industry with low taxes and minimum regulations, and you encourage education, strike out against sclerosis in labor markets, and welcome free trade.

Mr. Bush doesn't mind it at all to be thought of as looking occasionally like Forrest Gump. He is speaking the truth, and lending to the elaboration of the truth the character he has brought to the presidency.

High Goals for Disinformation?

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 22

THAT was a pretty bad egg the Pentagon laid when word was spoken of a projected Department of Disinformation. There is always a problem when the need arises to speak of operations that presuppose an enemy out there. There are structural ambiguities in what you say and what you don't say when you are dealing with an enemy. The trouble arises in dealings with Congress and the press, which are, among other things, instruments of mediation. The Pentagon (let us say) lets word out that North Korea is developing a biological weapon. Congress looks into the question, but some of the briefings done for Congress are shrouded in secrecy, and Congress acknowledges the need to maintain that secrecy. The press then comes into the picture. The press is, for professional reasons, skeptical. Quite rightly so, because history is larded with examples of govern-

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ment deceit, intended to generate the desired reactions.

And of course, North Korean forces get into the picture. That country, and countries that are on the North Korean side of things—perhaps for strategic or cultural reasons, perhaps because they gravitate to anti-American constructions—deny the biological-weapon story, or construe it as an attempt to cure measles. So what then flows down to the citizen is a third or fourth version of what actually is going on in North Korea.

But, of course, skepticism can become a way of life. It tends to reflect a critic's operative assumptions. What is building is what one might call the let's-call-it-quits element in the West. Those who are progressively opposed to direct action against Iraq are influenced by several factors, one of them a fear of nascent American imperialism, another, a fear of unilateralism; still another, the sense that Saddam Hussein has paid sufficiently for past transgressions.

From this camp, we are hearing on the matter of strategic deception. Ms. Flora Lewis, writing in the *International Herald Tribune*, says that "the suggestion that reasons and facts can be invented if the real ones aren't good enough is worrisome," which is indeed correct, though Rumsfeld was saying something slightly different. And Ms. Lewis goes on, ". . . increasingly insistent rumbles from Washington make it sound as if in a few more weeks [we] will be at war with Iraq. If so, a great deal of the reaction depends on how the violence starts, and how the war is conducted. Not much bland tolerance can be expected for some kind of elaborate scenario that would seek to make it look as if Saddam Hussein shot first."

Does the Pentagon have this in mind? What do you call it if the Pentagon advises that, even in the absence of concrete evidence that Baghdad is developing weapons of mass destruction, we should proceed on the assumption that they are doing so?

Is that a strategic deception? What do you call it if the commander in chief, informing himself as fully as he can, decides that the strategic national interest warrants going in to Baghdad? What is a legitimate length to which he can describe what we think to be going on in Saddam Hussein's Iraq that is concededly inflammatory in design?

What is the right word for focusing attention on credible threats? If a United Nations agency decrees that neither North Korea, nor Iran, nor Iraq are engaged in creating weapons of mass destruction, is *that* an act of disinformation?

Veto Finance Reform

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 26

A DISMAYING aspect of the whole scene on campaign-finance reform is the running question of constitutionality. As we know, the Supreme Court is not permitted to give "advisory judgments," which means that critical legislators, and the president, have to be guided by what they *think* the Constitution permits. That's what they'd tell you in civics classes. Practically, politicians are guided by what they think the Court can be counted on to do.

In 1972, a day or two after he was nominated for president by the Democratic party, Sen. George McGovern appeared, late at night, at what was an impromptu press conference. A burning issue of the day (July 1972) was school busing for the purpose of effecting integration. "What do you think of compulsory busing?" one reporter asked. McGovern: "The Supreme Court hasn't ruled yet on the question." He was saying that the Supreme Court's opinion on the subject would govern his own.

It has reduced to this—What would the Supreme Court rule?—on many subjects, most conspicuously, anything that touches on church/state. As recently as Monday, the Court dodged the question of the constitutionality of a display of the Ten Commandments on state grounds in Indiana. If you will believe it, one of the arguments made had to do with the secular content of the Ten Commandments. Like, if all ten merely said don't, like, kill, or lie, or screw around, then it would be okay to display them. But watch for those provisions that say things like, Thou shalt keep holy the day of the Sabbath. Some years ago Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan expressed his exasperation over successive court rulings that a) permitted state funds for textbooks for parochial schools, but b) forbade the use of funds for student picture books. What about student atlases? he asked.

Attention is being paid to a moral question: If the president believes that a bill is unconstitutional, or even that parts of it are unconstitutional, is he bound in conscience to veto it?

That point is being urged on President Bush, calling to his attention that during the campaign he expressed doubt about campaign-finance reform. But indications are that he just isn't going to do this. The legislators who voted in favor of the bill (by a substantial majority) also took a vow to abide by the Constitution. The White House hasn't said it, but clearly Bush followers are being told: "Maybe the bill is unconstitutional, maybe it isn't. There is no way to establish which is correct until the Court acts on the question."

That, of course, is a replication of the McGovern way of looking at thorny problems. Let the Court decide whether it's okay, and I'll go along.

What tends to recede from view are the questions: Is it a desirable law? Does President Bush think it is best for the country, or does he think it is a bad idea?—in which case, he should veto it.

The bill, as it is written, would leave in force those of its provisions that aren't specifically ruled unlawful by the Court. Attention focuses primarily on that part of the bill that denies to organizations the right to publish advertisements within 60 days of a general election, or 30 days of a primary, which argue, however indirectly, in favor of a candidate running for office. James Bopp Jr., a lawyer for the National Right to Life Committee and the Christian Coalition, has announced, as have representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union, that they can't wait to file suit on this provision of the proposed law. Says Bopp, "If you can make it a crime to mention the name of a politician 90 days of the year, you have made political speech more regulated than pornography, burning the flag, obscenity on T-shirts, and nude dancing."

But even if that provision is overturned, are we better off? The bill, which failed last year, is a child of the Enron scandal; in the views of many, a bastard child. It seeks to say that spending for politics is out of hand. That position greatly appeals to those who believe that government should play a lesser role in human affairs, and like to think that there is a correlation implicit here: less spending, less government.

But enthusiasts for this bill haven't pledged simultaneously to lower government spending. What they want to do is to fine-tune the way people spend money in politics, and make sure that, in doing so, they better the prospects of incumbents.

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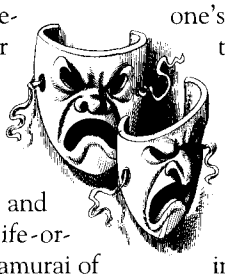
■ THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER ■

FLORENCE KING

TRY this at home: Flip on the TV and check out the first words you hear before the picture comes up. They very likely will be "balsamic vinegar" or "extra-virgin olive oil." The country is obsessed with cooking. Not gourmet cooking—the word is verboten now—just cooking, as in what used to be called slaving over a hot stove.

The hottest stoves around are on the all-cooking-all-the-time Food Network, which has something and someone for every taste. Nostalgic for your sorority days? Watch lovably ditzy Sara Moulton, who takes phone calls while she cooks and gets so gabby that she forgets to give oven times and temperatures. If you're into life-or-death seriousness there's the Samurai of the Spatula, the Iron Chef, grimly presiding over Oriental cooking contests described like horse races ("Number Six is browning on the turn . . . Number Four is starting to show signs of congealing").



Emeril Lagasse has succeeded in making cooking a manly art without wearing a chef's toque. Nobody wears a toque; they're as verboten as "gourmet." Mario Batali wears Bermuda shorts and orange clogs on *Mario Eats Italy*; Jamie Oliver (*The Naked Chef*) ties a tea towel around his waist to protect his ragged jeans; and an Indian girl whose name I forget wears very little of anything: Bib aprons hide cleavages, and she does breast presentations without a chicken.

Nobody is intimidating except the Frenchman who makes life-size swans out of spun sugar. We see them roaring off on their motorcycles to do their own shopping at the farmer's market, or, like the well-named Wolfgang Puck, attempting to drive a Viennese fiacre. The menus usually include travelogues; the Indian girl did a tour of Spain that ended with a ragout of bull testicles, and took us to a utensil-free public mess hall in Calcutta where customers sit on the floor with straw mats for plates while pairs of men lugging huge kettles race up and down the aisles dumping rice on the mats—very much like my mother's presentations.

Adroit frenzy is the order of the day. Nobody except Martha Stewart measures anything, and they all use the homey yet proprietary locution favored by generations of women who really did spend the best years of their lives slaving over a hot stove: "my" instead of "the," as in, "Now I'm going to add my milk." Viewers who need reassurance can tune in to *Food 911*, on which the cook goes to someone's home to repair a disaster. And to make accident-prone viewers feel better about themselves, they all use wadded-up tea towels instead of potholders or oven mitts. It looks awkward and impromptu, and holds out the possibility that the towel will trail in the burner and start a fire.

I confess I've gotten hooked on them despite what I said in an earlier column about noisy cooks. They're still noisy, but they no longer get on my nerves. In fact, I could watch them all day long and occasionally do, which presents some real food-for-thought: If *I* swim with the tide, it must be some tide. What is behind our national cooking fad?

On the simplest level, we need look no further than the current state of the vast wasteland. Newscasters have gotten so repellent, talk shows so superficial, sitcoms so unfunny, dramas so mundane, movies so predictable, that the Food Network offers the best fare on TV in every sense of the word. I can honestly say that I owe much of my improved culinary skills to Fox News. If you have a choice between Shepard Smith and balsamic vinegar, why not opt for the original? If Greta Van Susteren's recently filleted face puts you off, why not look at a real monkfish instead?

On a more complicated level, it may be that America is oversupplied with college graduates who crave a sense of real usefulness. The conflict began generations ago when working-class fathers kept saying, "Don't be like me, earn your living with your brain, not your back." This incessant chant was seconded by she who spent the best years of her life slaving over a hot stove: "Don't be like *him*, make something of yourself!"

Later, as many parents became college graduates themselves, the words changed but the tune did not. We went on marching to it until we created a vast horde of bored and disillusioned victims of dumbed-down curricula and puffed-up jobs who now feel a need to "do something with my hands." They don't want to be factory workers or laborers, but cooking is the perfect compromise: manual work infused with polished elegance, and just enough French to keep you on the right side of the educational divide.

I know all about it. For 40 years I have earned my living with my brain; I never did anything else, and can't do anything else unless you count typing. The downside of American upward mobility is the frustration of the need to feel essential, to provide something that people can't live without—the rueful knowledge that you've never *made* anything that is alleviated when you take up cooking.

Two other possible reasons for the cooking craze occur to me. Back in the '70s, *Cosmopolitan* ran a polemic by a male writer who said the women he knew actually tried to be bad cooks, inviting him to dinner so they could burn something to show him how liberated they were. It may be that women are feeling guilty over feminism, but that doesn't explain why so many men are Food Network junkies.

We might be motivated by the "War on Obesity" declared by the surgeon general. Sensing that the government is getting ready to create a new class of untouchables, we have resolved to stay thin the way the French do, by eating so well that we lose our taste for McFood and non-stop snacking. This also allows us to renew the old war on "our Anglo-Saxon repression," the rationale for the sexual revolution, by cultivating another form of sensuality.

Or maybe we simply like Food Network because we learn from it. It's done wonders for my unfortunate culinary heritage. My English side says, when in doubt, boil it in water; my Southern side, which is also an English side, says, when in doubt, fry it in bacon grease. But now I'm a devotee of balsamic vinegar and extra-virgin olive oil. **NR**

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